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By-lines

SEWARD HILTNER, Associate Professor of Pastoral Theology at the University of Chicago and Pastoral Consultant to *Pastoral Psychology* magazine, and HELEN J. HILTNER, Executive Secretary of the National Council on Family Relations, bring to their discussion of the varieties of family experience a many-sided knowledge of the problems involved.

STELLA CHESS, M.D., a former contributor to CHILD STUDY, makes another valuable contribution with her article on adoption. She is Associate in Psychiatry and Assistant Psychiatrist at Flower and Fifth Avenue Hospitals, a member of the Post-Graduate Psychoanalytic Faculty, N. Y. Medical College, and Coordinating Psychiatrist of the Northside Center for Child Development.

As the mother of three children, including twin girls, MARJORIE R. LEONARD writes about twins from first-hand experience as well as from professional background. She is a psychotherapist, specializing in parent consultation and child analysis.

ELIZABETH POPE, whose article, *A Room To Grow In,* in last summer's issue of CHILD STUDY, offered both practical tips and insight into attitudes and behavior, now discusses girls' clothes in the same vein.

As Director of Drama at the 92nd Street "Y" for the past ten years, and at the Museum of Art in Baltimore prior to that, KAY ROCKEFELLER has helped to promote the growth of live theatre for children in this air-wave conscious age.

ILKA LEWIN, leader of a discussion group in Human Relations at the New School for Social Research, discusses the art of communication in family living. She has been a student of psychology and human relations for over twenty years.

Cover photograph by TIM HORAN. Courtesy of *United Fruit Report,* October 1952.

Strength from diversity

At a very early age children become something more than a unit in a family constellation. They move outward into the larger world, passing step by step from family to neighborhood, from neighborhood to community, from community to nation, and finally from nation to the whole world itself. Not all succeed in making this journey from infancy to maturity. Very few, indeed, become mature enough to say with Benjamin Franklin: "God grant that not only the love of liberty but a thorough knowledge of the rights of men may pervade all the nations of the earth so that a philosopher may set his foot anywhere and say this is my country."

Franklin's prayer must now be regarded as tragically ironic. We live in a world sharply divided, and our children are confronted with the grim paradox of being taught to believe that all men are brothers and yet being expected to be good haters of our totalitarian enemies. This inconsistency places a cruel burden upon them. We must find some way of compensating for it if we expect these children to become normal, happy adults.

The place to begin this compensating procedure is at the first step when children move outward from the family circle into neighborhood experience. How do parents assist or retard the child's exploration of the larger world at this step? Curiously enough, many of the same sophisticated parents who have come to recognize the value of individual differences within the family are not able to carry over this principle to the inter-family plane. They restrict their children to associations with families approved by them, that is, by the parents. Thus the inconsistency of our attitude toward other people is compounded and children become more confused than ever.

Some parents limit their children's associations because they fear the consequences of their exposure to varying sets of values, or because of sheer snobbishness; others, on the basis of race, religion, income, occupation or mere manners. All of these reasons stem from a misunderstanding of the nature of democracy as embodied in three simple Latin words, *E Pluribus Unum,* which so clearly state that our strength springs from diversity. Should we forget this, and insist that all families conform to a single standard of conduct, the blessings of liberty would vanish and democracy would wither away.

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By Helen J. Hiltner and
Seward Hiltner

Though we have learned to accept and enjoy differences in individuals, we tend to insist on rigid patterns for family behavior

The varieties of family experience

Especially during the years since the formation of the Child Study Association, real progress has been made in understanding the varieties of individual experience. More and more parents are now prepared to accept the individual characteristics of their children, instead of demanding that each fit into the same mold. In many families today, Johnny is accepted and valued as much as Pete and Joe even though he, unlike them, gets only "C" grades in school, has a passion for the insides of automobiles, and can't stand Beethoven.

The acceptance of individuality has probably also increased among children themselves. George, instead of harboring secret self-contempt because he is too light for the football team, may take pride in his interest in music or chess or model trains, and be respected for these abilities, even by the football players. To be sure, the Rover Boy standards are still with us; and the child who varies too much from them may have a difficult time. But there are at least some signs of improvement.

There are two other fronts on which some progress has been made in accepting the varieties of individual experience: (1) that of color and church affiliation, and (2) that of attitude toward other cultures. The arbitrary refusal to accept people just because of skin color or church affiliation has not been knocked out, but it has been knocked down. There is also a growing appreciation, cultivated in most up-to-date schools, of the way people live in different cultural communities. This may be, for instance, through a study of some group of American Indians. Although the groups chosen for study are sometimes romantically selected, the net effect is to convey the notion that other cultures are legitimate (if not quite up to snuff), that their stubborn adherence to a language other than English is not entirely a matter for laughs (though shortsighted), and that people who look at life differently are not just queer (even though unfortunate). The gains are at times ambiguous, as our parentheses suggest. But they are real gains nevertheless.

These real gains in understanding the varieties of individual experience—extending at some points to the varieties of large group experience—have been carried over very little to the varieties of family experience. Where families are concerned, the drive toward conformity seems to be more powerful than ever before; and so is the penalty for those who do not conform. And this is true in spite of the fact that the pressures toward familial conformity are more subtle, hidden and anonymous.

Three facts shed some light on our present failure to understand more fully the varieties of family experience. We shall discuss these in turn.

First, most of us who read or contribute to this magazine and concern ourselves with simi-

lar articles and speeches are, in fact, members of the upper-middle class of our society—if we understand the term "class" to mean more a matter of standards and values than of economics. Very nearly our first concern in life is with what we conceive to be the proper rearing and education of our children. We are ambitious for them, not in the old authoritarian sense that Joe must become a broker or a banker like his father, but in the sense that we feel we *must* give them whatever they need (such as schooling, love, freedom, play materials, etc.) which will enable them to become free, responsible and happy citizens and parents themselves. Our ambition is no less compelling because it is less rigid. To the limit of our income, we are likely to sacrifice many other things in order to live in a district with the best schools and the most congenial playmates for our children. Better an old house and good schools than an architect's dream near a reactionary school board. On rational grounds, there is a lot to be said for this pattern of upper-middle class values.

But not everything. Suppose that Susan has been reared in such a home. No one has ever said that she *must* go through college. But she has always felt that, somehow, she must succeed. In her first few weeks of college she performs miserably in her studies, becomes discouraged and returns home in tears. There are storms. It turns out that the family has never anticipated the possibility that she might not go through college. The chaos finally passes and a semblance of peace returns to Susan and her household. Susan secures a job as a receptionist. To her surprise, she loves it—meeting people, getting a salary, assuming responsibility. Her parents do not share her joy. Their one consolation is that she may still manage to make a "good" marriage.

Is tolerance really acceptance?

No doubt Susan's parents have got along pleasantly over the years with many receptionists. Probably they look tolerantly at other girls, on the other side of town, who are destined to become receptionists. Yet all along they have had only a tolerance, not a genuine acceptance, of families whose daughters would consider themselves fortunate to become receptionists. The pressure toward conformity in their minds is anonymous; but when we examine it, we see it to be very real. And all the Susans of this age feel it. So, in fact, do the girls on the other side of town.

One-class housing

A second circumstance which limits our understanding of various family experiences is the tendency toward class segregation highlighted by the trend toward one-class housing. More and more new housing tends to be on a one-class basis. One suburb becomes more and more upper class. Nearby, another becomes increasingly upper-middle class. A third is lower-middle class. A public housing project is set up for the lower-class group. Nearly all trends, at every point in the class scale, move increasingly toward the segregation of one class-group from the others. And zoning regulations often write this principle into law. Only in the residential areas of some larger cities is there any strong trend moving against this increasingly visible separation of classes.

We must admit, of course, that people who live in a nearly one-class community do encounter some varieties of family experience. Their values and tastes will not be precisely like those of their neighbors. But they will have little opportunity or necessity for close contact with families of other class groups. Therefore, while a modern family may feel free to express many differences within the limits of a certain group pattern, if it is completely bound by the conformity-pressures of its own group (and does not even understand what is occurring), it is on the road to conformity in the most important sense of that term. Such a family may be under the illusion that it understands and accepts all kinds of people and families, when actually this view is never significantly tested.

A third factor in the situation is that some of the progress we have made has not occurred for the reasons we assert—but for other reasons we hesitate to admit. For instance, what accounts for the progress we have made toward accepting people of other church affiliations? Is it because we are morally superior, in this

regard, to our ancestors? Or is it more because we just do not consider church affiliation important enough to be divisive? Have we accepted the variations in spite of their importance? Or have we accepted them because we regard them as meaningless? If it makes no difference, from any point of view, whether a man or a family is Protestant, Roman Catholic or Jewish, there is little "virtue" in our accepting them. If it does make a difference, but we accept them anyhow as persons, then there is moral progress. Otherwise, not. Whatever the reasons, we have made gains. But if we attribute these to the wrong reasons, we put further gains in danger.

Our readers may well be prepared (we hope they are) to insist that they want to accept differences which *do* matter as well as differences which *do not* matter. But what *kinds* of differences? Some differences are matters of taste (such as kind of food eaten, or degree of personal cleanliness). Other differences concern values which are important but which do not threaten our own (such as church affiliation, point of view toward education or degree of interest in cultural pursuits). Still other differences affect values which differ from ours, which are important, and which seem to threaten our own values. We shall say more about this last group of differences.

Threatened values

Insofar as the tastes or values of others do not threaten our own basic values, we need more acceptance as well as understanding of the patterns of other families. But insofar as they threaten our adherence to our own basic values, we cannot find a solution in accepting them. For instance, we may be entirely understanding about other families' church affiliation or lack of it—until the eight-year-old who plays with our child keeps urging him to attend the rabidly fanatical Church of the Covenant in Blood, on pain of very literal hell-fire. Or we may be quite tolerant about sex play among small children—until it becomes clear that a group of precocious youngsters is exploiting ours. This is not to say that, in such cases, we cut communication dead with the other children and families. But we cannot wholly accept them in the way they present themselves to us without loss of basic values which we cherish.

Anyone who believes he draws no such lines is under an illusion. If we want to increase understanding and acceptance of other kinds of families, we must be realistic about what we mean. We do not mean an undermining of the basic values on which our own patterns of life rest. We do mean a disentangling of these basic values from the other kinds of values with which they are too often confused.

Our problem is, then, that many facts in modern life make it harder than ever for us to understand and accept the most significant differences between us and other families. And in addition, we sometimes attribute the progress we have made to the wrong reasons.

Toward an answer

In stating the problem we have been realistic even to the point of pessimism. But we believe there is an answer. Or at least we believe there are certain steps which can be made in the direction of an answer.

The first thing we can do is to admit to ourselves and one another that we are not above having biases and prejudices. To become aware that we have a slant is not necessarily to discard that slant. It may still be the best we can conceive, even after we have examined it. But if we know that it is a slant (that is, not absolute truth), we shall be less likely to reject the views and patterns of other families merely because they do not agree with ours.

Second, there may be something which families can do to diminish the growing pressure toward one-class housing and all that is associated with it. For instance, in the Housing Act of 1949 there is a provision which encourages community "redevelopment projects" through the combination of public and private initiative. If followed by a local community, this would prevent public housing projects from being isolated from other types of family housing. Perhaps, also, there are things which seriously concerned families can do in their own suburbs, such as questioning the bases upon which many zoning proposals are made.

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The adopted child grows up

By Stella Chess

The attitudes of parents and other people in the community affect the adopted child at every stage of his growth

David was in the habit of giving his mother a running account of the daily happenings at school. She listened today, as most days, with half an ear, saying "Oh, my! Did he hurt himself?" and "Isn't that nice!"—at more or less appropriate intervals. Suddenly she realized that in the kaleidoscope of events presented for view, there had been one of greater significance than the others. "What was that you said about Michael?" she asked. David repeated, "Michael said he was adopted two times—or else he had two mothers. I forget which, but anyway he's adopted, too. So then I said, 'I'm adopted' and they didn't believe me. And guess what? The teacher said my composition about Christmas was very good but . . ." and David went on reporting where he had left off.

Mrs. B. suddenly felt very foolish. She reviewed in her mind the many fears and concerns she and David's father had had about David's reactions to the knowledge that he was adopted. First, of course, had come the knowledge that if they wanted a child at all they would have to rely on another mother and father to provide their baby for them. Having passed this hurdle, there followed the period of arranging and waiting, hoping and being disappointed. When finally the baby was theirs, he was so precious that every movement, every breath, every stage of development seemed a pivot for their lives. Mrs. B. was particularly zealous about following all the rules concerning adopted babies. Gradually she found that she was less constantly aware that he was special, and revelled in the comfortable taking-it-for-granted feeling. The second adoption was a more humdrum procedure. Both David and Bernice knew they were adopted, and seemed unconcerned over their knowledge, but she sometimes found herself wondering what they really felt and thought.

Mrs. B. had moments of discomfort when she imagined a crisis occurring to which she could not rise. She pictured her children being taunted by the others because they didn't have "real" parents. She had visions of their questioning her about the exact circumstances that had led to their being offered for adoption. She found herself in a fantasy of horror hearing her children say, "I wish we had stayed with our other mommy." She had prepared and prepared, and now she felt over-prepared and yet she had not anticipated the precise situation that had arisen. She wasn't even sure that it was a "situation!"

Mrs. B. wondered if perhaps her friend Helen was right in the attitude she maintained toward her adopted daughter, Jill. Helen blandly assumed that there was nothing special about adoption. Jill had never even heard the word "adoption." Mrs. B. realized that when Jill did hear this word it would be mere chance where, when and how the discussion arose and

how it was explained. Sooner or later the fact would become known to the child. Mrs. B., on second thought, was glad that she had herself chosen the time and place to tell her children that they were adopted, and that she had made sure she and their father would be the people who told them the facts. She was especially reassured by David's casual prattle that he would feel free to bring up any questions and doubts to her directly.

Parents' differing approaches

It was odd how many adopted children Mrs. B. knew and how different were their parents' attitudes. Their approaches ranged all the way from denial that this should be given special attention, to constant insistence on the "chosen child" idea. She found herself hoping that David's casual tale was an evidence that her own handling had been healthy and good.

Within the last generation, enlightened legal consideration has been given to the needs of adopted children. The birth certificates of adopted children no longer differ greatly from the ordinary birth certificate. Adoption procedures and criteria have been examined and re-examined, and the psychological handling of adoptive situations also has been given much thought and study.

Adults have a strong tendency to assume that the things that bother them will be the things that bother their children. For generations it was standard practice to invent birth fictions for all children. The legends of the stork, the doctor and the store were accepted as necessary and good. Anything was presumed to be better than the knowledge that the baby grew inside the mother's body. Now the adoptive mother is horrified by the necessity of communicating to her child the knowledge that the youngster did *not* grow inside her own body! In each case, it is the parents, to whom the facts have definite, disturbing connotations, who experience difficulties and are dismayed.

To the child, facts have only the connotations given them by their individual life experiences. Adoption will be shameful to a child where the fact is treated as a shameful one, surrounded by innuendo and finally admitted by the parents with reluctance and a sense of defeat. On the other hand, the child who knows that he is adopted, but whose inquiries are brushed aside as unimportant, also will come to inaccurate conclusions because he has had no chance to clarify his incomplete notion of the relationships involved.

The two major dangers are 1) to assume the fact of adoption to be a source of danger and anxiety which must be kept in mind constantly as a potential difficulty and 2) to assume that the fact of adoption is of no importance. In either case, clarification of the facts and their meanings are denied both parents and children.

A parent-child relationship begins with the meaning of the new baby to the parents whether the baby is their own biological child or is adopted. The fact of adoption takes its place with many other special considerations that temper the infant's welcome: economic circumstances, misfortunes with previous pregnancies and older children, dislocations of family units due to war or personal reasons, the sex of the baby and so forth. Moreover, adoption may have varying significance in different cases. A baby may be adopted with pride, and with relief that childlessness need not be accepted. The necessity to adopt may give rise to mixed feelings, with elements of defeat and resentment. Or an adoption, as well as a pregnancy, may have been planned in the expectation that it will cement a marriage which has little other reason for continuance.

As far as the baby is concerned, mommy and daddy are the people who bear those titles. He has no previous point of reference, no knowledge of what social and biological factors are supposed to mean. It is all one to him until he hears differently. It is to his advantage, and to the advantage of his parents, that he be given the facts accurately first. They can take care of the connotations as they arise and change from stage to stage in the child's life.

The facts are simple. Mommy and daddy couldn't grow their own baby. The reasons for this may be clear, so that they can be explained in terms understandable to the child, as when an illness has made pregnancy unwise or impossible for the mother. Or the reasons

may not be completely clear even to the parents, as in cases of low fertility—but this lack of knowledge is in itself a fact that can be stated simply if the child asks about it. Parents can explain that they wanted a baby so they found a mother who was growing one for which she could not care after it was born. The reasons for her inability to care for the child may be known or unknown, told or withheld. Of great importance is the point that she wished to be sure that her baby found a good home where he would be wanted and cared for well. These facts are not traumatic to a child, who can quite easily grasp the concept that from this moment on he was his new parents' baby, for this has been his experience. He will demand stories of diapering, orange juice, the time he almost fell out of his carriage, the day they thought he was lost—all the exploration of parent-child experiences that the ordinary child pursues. He may also want to be told what guarantees there are that no one can turn up and claim him, that this is truly a permanent arrangement. The legal situation is simple and conclusive, and can be put into children's terms.

Other people's attitudes

A radio story about a struggle for the possession of an adopted child, a chance comment on the lack of resemblance between members of a family, a situation of disharmony between members of the family; these and many other situations may cause the child to consider again at various stages of his growth just what it means to be adopted. A statement by an adult or another child may raise questions which seem pointless or accusatory. However foolish, these reactions from other people must be dealt with, and can be handled more successfully if the tradition of open discussion has been followed. Such discussion may concern matters in which "I don't know" is the answer, but it must not include "I don't like to discuss it," "It isn't important," or "You are more precious to me than if you weren't adopted."

The attitude that adoption is an inevitable source of danger and anxiety can manifest itself in a number of ways. There are some parents who strive to keep the knowledge of adoption a complete secret, making important decisions for this reason. The choice of school, moving to a new community, avoidance of old friends, even a masquerade of pregnancy and a hospital stay have been carried out for the purpose of preserving the child from this supposedly horrifying knowledge. In a few such situations, the parents have suddenly become aware in the child's older adolescence or adulthood that he had dutifully carried on the masquerade of ignorance after overhearing, when supposedly asleep, a parental discussion of the facts.

Over-concern may create problems

There are others who, whether or not they have openly discussed the matter with the child, constantly feel impelled to examine his reactions and their own behavior in the light of the fact that he was not born to them. These are the parents who are on the watch for all indications of concern, and initiate numerous discussions with the child. A passing comment, a chance remark, may be picked up so relentlessly that the child may finally be convinced of his conflict and anxiety over a subject which might otherwise have given him little genuine concern.

This exaggerated conviction by the parents that they must be constantly on the alert for problems is sometimes fostered by adoption agencies themselves. The agencies frequently insist upon discussion with their clients of their feelings about the adoption situation. It is assumed in such discussions that conflicts are inevitably present and that they must be exposed and dealt with at length. This assumption can lead adoptive parents to assume great conflicts and ambivalence where they scarcely exist. By the insistence on the existence of problems, discussion may help create the very uncertainties it aims to eliminate.

At the opposite extreme, as we have seen, are parents who try to deal with the problems of adoption by denying that they exist. The refusal of the family to recognize and give serious consideration to the child's concern leaves him to draw his own conclusions, and these conclusions will be shaped by the attitudes of oth-

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By Marjorie R. Leonard

Twins: the myth and the reality

Twinship has unique advantages. But these can be lost if popular ideas about twins force them into identical molds

You are the parents of twins! What excitement! What confusion! You are deluged with visitors. Your friends are as thrilled as you are, many envy you. They had always hoped to have twins. "How smart you are," they say. "What luck to have hit the jack-pot!" You swell with pride at your achievement. You are walking on clouds.

But other more practical-minded friends bring you back to earth in a hurry. They sympathize with you and they point out how much time and strength you will need in the first few years; they remind you that this is a case in which "two cannot live as cheaply as one."

Still others laugh—laugh as though this news were the funniest they had heard in years! Life has played a big joke on you! You got more than you bargained for. "Rather you than we," they think.

And how do you feel? Between the gifts, visits, advice and sympathy, you probably feel confused. Elated one moment, depressed the next, and altogether a bit scared. You have set your sights for one baby, but now there is a second one. Even if you knew ahead of time that twins were coming, you probably found it hard to cope either with the idea or the practical fact. Now there are a dozen decisions to be made at once. Where to put the other crib? How will all those bottles fit into the refrigerator? How many diapers? And names? What shall we call the second one?

You begin to realize that there are many immediate practical problems to solve, that later on there will be many emotional and psychological aspects to the rearing of twins which will be different from those of children born singly. You probably start looking for the book which will answer all your questions. No doubt you will be as surprised as I was to find that it is still to be written; that almost all the literature dealing with twins treats them as though they were an interesting phenomenon to be observed and studied. Most authors seem to forget that twins are people; that some day they will need to lead their lives as integrated individuals. Above all they forget, or never realize, how confused parents can become over the many special "twin" situations. In the numerous excellent books that have been written for parents as a guide to the upbringing of children, twins are either ignored or the subject is "covered" in at most two or three pages. For this reason you may be interested in some of the ideas I have put together as the result of professional and personal experience, conversations with adult twins, interviews with parents of twins and everything that I could find to read on the subject.

The idealized picture

It should not surprise us that the birth of twins causes excitement. After all, there is only one set of twins born to eighty-seven single

births. But it is more than their rarity which excites people. Everyone seems to feel that twins are something special. Wherever they go they attract attention, smiles of friendly curiosity. This interest is so universal that it is exploited by advertisers in the promotion of permanent waves, washing machines and what not.

Parents of twins will be told very frequently by friends and near-acquaintances: "I had always hoped to have twins." It is clear the moment it has been spoken that those who say it have no idea what it really means to bring up twins. It is mythical twins they are thinking of, not the hungry, diaper-consuming reality. They may not be aware of it, but beneath this wish to have twins usually lies the wish to *have been* a twin. A twin, they feel, is the ideal companion: one who understands everything even without being told; someone with whom there would never be a quarrel; twins never feel lonely; the next best thing to having a twin oneself is to have twin children. It is the lonely child, the misunderstood child who often fantasies that he has a twin. Now, as an adult, the once lonely child sees in any newborn twins two human beings who he believes will actually fulfill his own childhood fantasies. He takes a vicarious pleasure in observing them as they grow up and overlooks or forgets anything which does not fit into his dream-picture. Thus we see how the twin relationship is often idealized, set apart from all other human relationships.

However, one does not need to have had a fantasy twin as a child to become enmeshed in this idealized picture about them. There are many widely accepted ideas about twins that are entirely unrealistic. Twins are not supposed to be jealous of each other; "they understand each other so well there can be no occasion for them to disagree." From infancy on, twins are treated as though they were different from any other brothers or sisters. Parents feel they should have special kinds of names, that they should be dressed alike. Everything is done to emphasize the twins' similarity, even in the case of non-identical twins.

These prevalent attitudes toward twins so mold their personalities that in actuality they may develop into just the types of individuals they are expected to be. People fail to see that many traits which are attributed to twins are not necessarily innate; the parents' early emphasis on the twinship may have contributed much to the development of those traits. This whole group of unrealistic attitudes makes up what I call the "myth about twins." This myth is far-reaching. It includes reports about twins who established contact by means of telepathy; of twins who have had identical illnesses at the identical moment; and of twins who were separated in early childhood but nevertheless lived remarkably similar lives. Though a few such reports have been scientifically investigated and found to have some basis in fact, these cases are such rare phenomena that they can be considered exceptions to, rather than typical of, twin relationships.

Many beliefs about twins should be classed as superstitions, among them such ideas as that twins remember everything from the moment they are born, and have powers of prescience, or, as certain Indian tribes of British Columbia believe, possess magical powers over the weather.

Therefore, beware of the myth! Treat twins as they really are, not as they are supposed to be. There are both advantages and disadvantages to twinship, which it is hoped will become clear as we describe various moments of importance in the lives of twins.

Off to a good start

Have you ever thought what it feels like to be a twin? It makes quite a difference whether it is identical or non-identical twins you are thinking about. Non-identical twins, that is, fraternal or two-egg twins derived from two independent eggs fertilized by two sperm, are no more alike than any brothers or sisters of the same family, except as a result of their environment. Yet they are given a special kind of treatment and pressure is unwittingly exerted to make them behave as people feel twins should. However, they do not necessarily feel alike and may well have an urge to do things differently, each in his own tempo. They often feel rebellious at being treated as though the same things were expected of each of them.

In many ways you may find them more difficult to take care of than identical twins because from the very beginning there will be signs of different personalities.

It is quite the opposite situation with identical twins, that is one-egg twins resulting from the division of a single fertilized egg, and, therefore, duplicate editions. They started life as one and, hereditarily, they are as similar as any two human beings can possibly be. Dissimilarities are the result of experience and environment. If these twins are eventually to function as mature, well-integrated individuals, it will be necessary for them to grow up in an environment which treats them as individuals.

Let each one be himself

Thus we see that although identical and non-identical twins will feel differently about their twinship, as far as the parents are concerned it is important, in both cases, to allow each one to be himself, to have divergent experiences and to develop individual personality traits and talents.

The first step in this direction will be in the choice of names—names which are distinctly different. Alliterative names, as for example, Ronald and Roland, or Jane and Joan, or names which seem to be naturally paired as Jack and Jill, Punch and Judy, may appear "cute" and "twinlike." However, they emphasize the unhealthy idea that one twin is not complete without the other. Worse yet are such monstrosities as Romeo and Juliet, Ura and Ima Hog, Kate and Duplicate, Max and Climax—yes, twins have actually been given such names. But imagine what it must mean to grow up, to go to school, to be teased for a lifetime because of such names.

Even twins who are so much alike that there is danger of confusing them as infants soon show distinguishing characteristics. It may be that one eats more than the other, weighs more, has a shriller cry, or a deeper voice. Whatever these differences are, they will create a different reaction in you and you will handle each in a slightly different way from the other. Thus although the twins are theoretically brought up under the same environmental conditions, actually the environment differs by just such little actions on your part. If you permit yourself to react to the needs of each of the babies individually, the personality differences will continue to develop.

But hold on now! Don't go overboard in your effort to take "individuality" into account! It would be going to extremes to put each of the twins on a self-demand schedule. This has actually been tried, but given up in short order, as Doris Lantz Douglas describes in "Twins Are Fun."[1]. Let's hope that circumstances permit the twins to be bathed at the same time, be fed at the same time and that they decide to sleep about the same number of hours. But if Jack angrily demands his feeding while Billy is still sound asleep—then of course feed Jack. The chances are that Billy will be awake by the time Jack has been fed. But no crime would be committed if you were to wake him then. And if you feel you are being unfair to Billy to feed Jack first because he is so demanding, you can comfort yourself that in a short time Billy is likely to be the impatient one. You will, incidentally, find it necessary to make many compromises between your desire to keep a regular schedule and the children's needs of the moment. Let common sense be your guide. It won't help the babies if you wear yourself out.

Four hands are better than two

However it works out, you are going to need help at first in caring for the babies. By hook or by crook it should be arranged for mother to have help at feeding time, and, if possible, during some part of the day, when the twins are tiny. This is one time when you should unashamedly accept assistance from relatives, friends or neighbors. The physical work of caring for twins, the laundry, the housework, cooking and formula making (one would almost have to compete with a Guernsey cow in order to nurse them) is more than one person should try to accomplish.

Almost every authority on the care of children today emphasizes the importance of "mothering," and all that the word signifies, for their later wholesome development. With-

1. "Twins Are Fun," from *My Baby*, by Dorothy Lantz Douglas; Shaw Publications, Inc.; New York, 1952; Vol. X, Nos. 3, 4 & 5.

out help for mother, each twin will be short-changed on this "mothering." Of course, when no help is available, there are ways of feeding both babies at the same time although none of them can be considered completely satisfactory. If your lap is not big enough to hold them both it is best to arrange it so that one baby is held during the feeding while the other has its bottle propped in the crib; and, of course, that they take turns in occupying the lap!

Every mother looks forward to quiet, cuddly moments with her baby. With twins it is difficult for the mother to find time for such moments. If she is feeding one child and the other is lying in his crib screaming his head off she will feel that whatever attention she gives to one is at the expense of the other. She feels frustrated because she cannot divide herself in two and she feels an inner emptiness because her own feelings toward the baby cannot come to full realization. Being able to give one's whole attention and affection to one baby at feeding time, without feeling that the other is neglected, is just as important to the mother as it is to the child.

The child's need to feel that he has mother or father all to himself at certain times is important throughout his whole childhood. It will be of immeasurable help to the twins if you can arrange as often as possible moments when you can be alone with one or the other. This is something that requires planning; it will do more than almost anything else to help you to know your twins as individuals, and to enable them to feel that they each have an individual relationship to each of the parents. It is the most effective way of combating the tendency to treat them as a unit, as "the twins." Also, they will be less likely to become too dependent upon one another and to feel that they must be together at all times.

Alike but different

One of the attitudes that parents are always being cautioned against is the tendency to draw comparisons between their children. Just because children come from the same family is no reason to expect them all to be equally good in athletics, or to get equally good grades in school. Needless to say, the temptation to make comparisons is even stronger in the case of twins, especially identical twins: the fact that their start in life is identical leads us to expect them to retain this identity. But even identical twins vary in the degree of their likeness, from the moment they are born. Some will be ready to sit up at the same time, start creeping at the same time, cut the same tooth at almost the same time—but in another set of twins there may be a difference of weeks and even months in these developments. Moreover, just because one twin is first in one accomplishment does not mean that he will be first in the next.

The charts which Dorothy Burlingham includes in her book on twins, *Twins—A Study of Three Pairs of Identical Twins*[2], are very instructive on this point. It is interesting to note on a chart of Bessie and Jessie that there are many times when there is what one might call a "see-saw" effect. For a period of time one twin will eat more than the other and then this behavior will be reversed. The same is true with the children's weights: one may be heavier than the other for a month or so and then there will be turnabout.

Of course, we cannot entirely avoid comparisons, but it is important that we accept certain behavior differences in the same way that we accept the fact that one child gets a tooth sooner than the other. An example will make this more clear. In one set of twins of my acquaintance one baby weighed almost a pound more than the other at birth. And because the heavier baby was consistently a better eater the weight difference increased to almost two pounds at one year of age. This gave the heavier twin quite an advantage over the other, which she readily recognized and put to constant use. If they shared a playpen, the heavier twin was always pushing the lighter one around, pulling her hair and taking her toys away from her. There was an attempt to prevent this by putting them in two playpens side by side. Even though each child would start out with the same number of toys as the other, in a very short time the heavier twin would somehow be in possession of all of them.

2. *Twins—A Study of Three Pairs of Identical Twins*, by Dorothy Burlingham; Imago Publishing Company, Ltd.; 1952.

It was as though the lighter twin was so accustomed to being bullied that she submitted to the demands of the heavier twin even without being "manhandled!"

The parents thought to remedy this situation by urging the lighter twin to eat more than she desired of her own accord, and so catch up to her sister in weight. This sounds like logical reasoning but all it accomplished was to produce a feeding difficulty in the lighter twin when she was little and to over-emphasize the importance of food to a point where it created a new problem. In her teens, the once lighter twin outstripped the other by twenty pounds, turning the former feeding problem into a dieting problem. The basic issue of dominance of one twin over the other was not in the least helped by attempting to equalize the weight differences.

It is questionable whether there is anything that can or should be done in such a case, except the exercise of sufficient supervision to prevent any real physical harm. Dominance is one of the traits which may give the appearance of permanency. However, if we are good observers and if we do not, through our own reactions, do something which is apt to crystallize the relationship, we are likely to find that the see-saw effect can also occur here. In one instance, even though the twin who appeared to be less aggressive never achieved physical equality, by virtue of his ingenuity he became the leader and instigator of many of their activities.

There is a tendency for twins not only to run the gamut of the virtues and the vices, but to take turns: the one who is the "good" twin at one time may be "bad" during the next phase—and vice-versa. This is one way in which the twins may express their feelings of "oneness" with each other. They behave as though they were two different aspects of the same personality.

This "oneness" is very noticeable in the early language development of twins. The pronouns "we" and "us" are often learned before "I" or "me." We often find that twins do not brag about "what I can do"—a visitor to the home is commanded to "come and see what *we can do.*" Although each of the twins may perform individually, each doing exactly the same tricks on the trapeze as the other, neither of them will yet think of it in terms of a solo performance.

Different but alike

In all young children there is a strong need to have the same things as other children their age. In many families parents respond to this feeling by always buying each a toy when any new toys are bought, or buying each some new clothing. With twins this need for similar possessions becomes emphasized by the accepted attitude toward twins—the myth again. Identical toys, identical clothing are purchased long after this is a necessity for the children. The common assumption, "of course, twins should be dressed alike," is even applied to non-identical twins while they are young. Up to about the age of three or four this custom fits in with the children's need to have similar things. However, parents should keep in mind the fact that eventually they will want to encourage the children to dress differently so that they will have a chance to give expression to their own tastes. It will be easier for them later to make the transition to distinct and different clothing if a distinction, at least in color, is made right from the start.

However, there should be no hard and fast rule to determine when the twins should or should not be dressed alike. It is just as important that they be given every opportunity to enjoy their twinship as it is to keep in mind the ultimate goal of trying to help them develop their individuality. It is their mode of dressing which more than anything else identifies them as twins. There are times when it will be fun for the twins to be recognized as such and to confound and confuse people by their alikeness. But they should never have the feeling that they can face the world only when they look like twins. One pair of adult twins described what they considered the most embarrassing moment in childhood. They were perhaps five or six years of age. They had been playing at home and were dressed in "any old thing" good enough for their own backyard. Their mother sent them to the corner grocery

Continued on page 38

By Elizabeth Pope

Girls' clothes and family quarrels

"Too expensive . . . unbecoming . . . poor taste." What should mothers do if they object to the clothes their daughters choose?

My ten-year-old and I recently finished putting together her winter wardrobe. On the whole, I think we did very well. No tears. No temper. No pitched battles. We agreed on a surprising number of issues and where we couldn't agree we managed to compromise.

It's true that her skirts will be longer than I would like, but won't dangle mid-calf, which is what she would prefer. There are too many gee-gaws on her party dress but the lines are simple. Her school shoes are a cross between tough oxfords— for her feet's sake—and loafers—for her pride's.

Since the years which trip up most mothers and daughters are still ahead of us, I can hardly start congratulating myself on having successfully weathered the Great Clothing Ordeal. But I think I've made a good beginning. And I think I know why. Reason number 1) because at the moment our relationship—my daughter's and mine—is easy and pleasant and warm. Reason number 2) because I've so many other things on my mind just now that, once minimum requirements have been met, I can't feel very strongly about what the child does or does not wear. When it comes to fundamentals, I'm still in there pitching, but I'm in no mood to fuss over details.

What all this amounts to is a combination of flexibility and friendly control which seems to work wonders in handling the clothes issue—at least at the uncomplicated age of ten. It remains to be seen whether it will prove equally effective a few years hence when the matter will doubtless become much more difficult.

For although clothing may cause quarrels from the earliest snow suit days—"Do I *have* to wear bottoms?"—it is during the early teens that the issue assumes its most troublesome proportions. This is the time when bad feeling generated by constant hassels over clothes can spill over onto the entire fabric of family life, involving fathers and other siblings and causing genuine unhappiness all the way round. The relationship between mothers and daughters—never easy during adolescence—is sometimes strained almost to the breaking point by recurring clashes over what to wear, when and why. Many mothers see their daughters as perversely determined to flout their deepest convictions with regard to good taste and practicality and wise spending. And mothers, from the daughter's point of view, are incurably "old hat," or just arbitarily "mean," or unbearably "stuffy."

It takes all a woman's wisdom, know-how, insight and sense of humor to steer herself and her daughter through these days without frequent clashes over clothes. And sometimes it can't be done. Even with the most judicious handling of the issue it may remain a source of serious friction and trouble. Clashes over

clothes are often a reflection of basic mother-daughter conflict and are not necessarily due to mismanagement of the immediate issue.

Does this mean that where basic relationships are sound the clothes question will take care of itself; and that in this case a mother won't need to give any special thought to the matter? The Child Study Association and other parent education authorities are agreed that clothes do not cause conflict between mother and daughter nearly as often as they reflect it. But clashes will probably occur somewhere along the line even where their relationship is fundamentally sound and affectionate. The child may quite naturally express her struggle for independence and individuality by demanding that her taste in clothes be respected, and these situations work out best if the mother can shake herself loose somewhat from her conventional judgments about clothes and try to see what they represent to the child. Some women have a wonderful kind of natural insight which can take the place of conscious effort, but many of us need to work at understanding our children's feelings and needs, and at finding a way to meet them without jeopardizing our own peace of mind.

Flexibility and control

The formula I seem to have stumbled on—flexibility plus control, superimposed on a sound emotional foundation—is the approach that works best all round, according to both experienced parents and child care experts. But the big question is, as always, how much flexibility and how much control? How much freedom can a child handle before it becomes a burden to her and to her mother?

We know that unlimited freedom can be as tyrannical as none at all—that a child who is allowed to make too many mistakes and is then "stuck" with them will be bound to resent her mother's apparent indifference. And we know that vacillating between the two extremes of rigid control and a completely hands-off policy (sometimes mistaken for moderation) is worse than either. What's needed is a real willingness to adjust to, and keep pace with a youngster's changing needs. Accompanying such a course must be reasonable expectations on the mother's part. She must not set her sights too high, or expect smooth sailing at all times. Even under ideal conditions and with the most perfectly balanced formula, there are bound to be times when mother and daughter can't agree, when each is certain she's right and compromise doesn't come easily.

Group standards

A child seldom has enough confidence in her own half-developed taste to be willing to match it against her mother's. That's where collective taste—group standards—serves her well. It's easier to differ from mother if you're proposing what "everybody's wearing" instead of an untried commodity you yourself aren't sure of. That's one reason why at so early an age as eight or nine children like having dresses just like everyone else's and later insist on wearing what almost amounts to a uniform. Mothers of older girls tell me that in adolescence the group standards become absolute law, so that an objection to, for instance, the currently popular hair-do is usually not worth the crisis it provokes.

Most mothers are at least dimly aware of all this, but have their own good reasons for sticking by their clothing guns. It is not easy to let a youngster buy a dress you are convinced is unbecoming just because friend Janey has it. It's especially hard if, in your opinion, the dress costs too much or wouldn't be appropriate to wear at next week's family dinner.

What most mothers want to know is whether it serves a vital purpose for a child to make decisions about clothes on her own, since the process inevitably involves mistakes. Does the child gain enough from the experience to outweigh the obvious practical disadvantages?

The answer seems to be: up to a point, yes; but not when the cost to other members of the family is too great. A child gains not only emotional satisfaction, but practical worldly experience in the long, hard business of learning to dress. At best, it isn't easy. Without opportunities for trial and error, it's doubly difficult, and the chances of really dismaying mistakes being made, when a girl leaves home for school or job and *has* to make some of her own choices, are greatly increased.

This isn't to say that a mother should cultivate an attitude of saintly forbearance while her daughter disfigures herself and wrecks the family budget. Any handling of the issue should take into consideration mother's rights as well as the child's. This is important not only for the mother's sake, but for the sake of her relationship with her daughter and the atmosphere in which they work together. The entire family suffers when a mother feels put upon or harried.

Where many mothers get into trouble is seeing the issue as an either-or proposition. Either she gets her way, or I do. Too often forgotten is the fact that issues don't have to be met head-on and that there is usually another way of handling them.

One possible course is to keep hands off with regard to what a child wears when she is with her peers, but to make it pretty clear that when she is doing things with you or other adults her clothes should be chosen with some consideration for what you feel is suitable. A child will be more likely to accept this if she has been told, in so many words, that her generation and yours often disagree about clothes and that some adults (of whom you may well be one) are really offended if youngsters appear on social occasions in dungarees and boys' shirts or in shorts.

Buying clothes

When it comes to buying clothes—more complicated than deciding what to wear—freedom must be freely given where given at all, but in graduated doses. At what age a child should first be given the chance to make clothing decisions for herself depends on when she first shows a genuine interest. First decisions may involve no more than the color of socks or the selection of hankies. Later on, freedom may be extended to belts and scarves, and so on, up the sartorial ladder. As she matures, a child will have more and more of a voice in the selection of everything she wears, but it will be a long time before she should be allowed to make expensive, long-lasting purchases (like coats and suits) by herself.

By the time she's in her teens, she's sometimes going to want to buy things you don't like. She should occasionally be given that privilege. Her mistakes will be fewer if she has not felt dominated and pressured in previous decisions and if her freedom has not been granted grudgingly or in a punishing spirit. "You've made your own bed, now lie in it" is the most common form of the latter.

At this age it is sometimes a good plan to bring a friend along on shopping expeditions. The presence of a second child sometimes serves to deflect differences before they crystallize and cushion blows if battle develops. Here are other practical tips that have been found helpful:

1. Consider your child's wishes and remember that the way she looks to herself is important, as well as the way she looks to the sophisticated adult eye.

2. Have, however, the courage to say no if your child wants something that is too expensive, painfully unbecoming or altogether inappropriate. Remember that all-out permissiveness, as we have said, can be punishment—in effect, if not in purpose.

3. Don't despair of a child's developing individuality and originality in taste just because she insists on wearing the prevailing uniform of her gang. She can develop her own style by being encouraged to add her own touches—scarves, jewelry, etc.—to her outfits.

4. Take an interest in the wardrobe of even very young children. Little girls sometimes suffer because their mothers—feeling that clothes are unimportant—pay little attention to how they look. At the very least you owe it to your children, regardless of your personal feelings, to see that they are not habitually dirty or shabby or inappropriately dressed.

5. A clothes allowance is an excellent idea for older girls, but a child should be eased into it by degrees. Start with

a limited allowance for accessories, or small extras, which are intended to last only a short time.

Neurotic attitudes

CHILD STUDY readers don't need to be reminded that no general formula can ever solve basic emotional problems. If the matter of clothing becomes a peg for neurotic conflicts, no amount of careful handling of the issue is going to prove very effective. What every clothes-troubled mother will have to decide is whether her situation calls simply for a different approach or whether it is part of a much larger problem. If she seems to be having an undue amount of trouble over a considerable period of time, and if the tips and approaches suggested here don't seem to apply, she may well assume that unconscious wishes and feelings on one or both sides are involved and that she may need professional help.

There are a number of neurotic attitudes which sometimes mask themselves in the relatively safe guise of clothing disagreements. Conflict is sometimes grounded in a mother's unconscious wish to keep her child a baby, or, conversely, to make her glamorous too soon. Sometimes unconscious jealousy, with its subsequent feelings of guilt, is at play; or seeing one's child as a projection of oneself and not as a separate individual; or unconsciously identifying the child with someone else in your life.

The possibility of neurotic complications is only noted here, for we are speaking now of the great majority of families where a little more tact and understanding can help to meet the problem. The difficulties between mother and daughter about clothes represent one aspect of the growing-up process and the ever-changing relationship between parents and children. As such, they deserve some real thought and the same kind of careful, sensible attention we give to other stages and problems in the upbringing of our daughters. Like these, clothes-problems have a very positive side. For the mother and daughter who work through the situation so that they can enjoy shopping and talking about clothes together have—as every woman knows—a real bond.

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Live drama for children

By Kay Rockefeller

Even in the age of radio and TV, live drama has great value and appeal for young audiences

Standing in the lobby a few minutes before curtain time, as hundreds of eager youngsters pour into the theatre, I always marvel—and delight—at the pull that live theatre still has for children, even in this air-wave conscious world. They come again and again, in increasing numbers, some from as far as a hundred miles, to see personified on the stage their concepts of right and wrong, the fairy-queen, the stepmother, Cinderella, or a totally new character who might even be themselves.

In a world where movies and TV might seem to have crowded out all other forms of theatrical expression, why is Children's Theatre finally coming into its own? The impulse to entertain children is ancient but only within the past decade has a concentrated effort been made to investigate the ingredients of Children's Theatre to discover what it is that makes the live drama so rewarding. Only recently have courses in this field been offered in our better universities, and research clinics been organized to determine what it is that really attracts the young mind.

Perhaps one reason is that live drama has its own appeal to audiences of all ages. The experience at first hand, the value of laughing at what is on stage at the moment, the illusion of its actually happening, the unadulterated human element in the live presentation, the color, the mass response—all of these contribute to the glamor of the theatre. Laughter, excitement, suspense, even momentary terror, are contagious. Attending a performance in a crowd is in itself a rich experience.

Many people are apt to assume that there is antagonism between the value as entertainment of movies and TV, and that of the live theatre. I see no reason why we should deny children the satisfaction and delight of witnessing theatre in any and all forms. Children in our modern world need to be brought into contact with all forms of dramatic entertainment, as well as with more obviously educational programs.

Despite this ever-present need for satisfying drama for children, Children's Theatre as we know it today is comparatively young. It mushroomed into being in a movement paralleling that of the Community Theatres in the years following World War I. Today there are 800 Children's Theatre organizations which are circularized each month by the *Children's Theatre Newsletter*. Each year a National Children's Theatre Conference is attended by many hundreds of delegates. This year's, to be held during the last week in August, will take place at Adelphi College in Garden City, New York. Adelphi is one of many colleges which include courses in Children's Theatre in their regular drama curriculum. Many organizations such as the Goodman Theatre at the Chicago Art Institute, the Children's Theatre associated with the Cleveland Playhouse, Jun-

ior Programs in Seattle, Washington and the Henry Street Playhouse in New York, have a full season's program of activity comparable in scope to the one with which I am associated at the Playhouse of the YMHA in New York.

Although Children's Theatre has made great strides, unfortunately a good many plays are still being acted either with an all-children or an all-adult cast. Either a woman in her thirties portrays Gretel, lost and weeping in the forest, or a well-fed six-year-old plays the wicked witch. Our experience has been that best results are obtained by having a role played by a performer in the proper age level. Children, by the way, given an opportunity, enjoy their work with adults and are quite as conscientious as adults concerning their attendance at rehearsals and other responsibilities. Of course, they are a director's dream as far as memorization is concerned. They learn their lines more rapidly than adults, and indeed, by the time the performance date arrives, they know everyone else's lines as well.

In our experience, when children are acting or watching other children in performances, they are much less exacting and are much more ready to fill in gaps out of their own imagination than in a performance of a more professional nature with adult actors. Perhaps here the movies have had their influence, or perhaps they expect grown up performances to be more finished and to come across with the "real thing." They demand from adult performances more realistic effects. One of the greatest disappointments to a young audience several years ago was that we didn't let them see Cinderella's coach rolling off to the ball. We had felt that the sound effects of the horses' hoofs and the commands of the coachman would suffice, but if we were ever to do *Cinderella* again we would give much more attention to that particular phase of Cinderella's transformation from rags to riches.

Schools, summer camps and recreational centers are just beginning to realize the value of creative dramatics (wherein boys and girls

T. H. Rivers

Children at a performance by the Sioux City Junior League of "The Three Wishes"

improvise and write their own plays) in giving youngsters of all ages an opportunity to express themselves in a group. In this field the play is *not* the thing; it concerns itself much more with the individual's needs. Within a plot situation the child is given the opportunity to act out his own feelings concerning the problem at hand, and this he usually does with great zest.

In this connection a great deal has been written concerning the merits of the drama of psychodynamics, in which children with overpowering emotional problems are given a chance to act out their aggressions and other difficulties under expert guidance. All of us who work in Children's Theatre come face to face with situations involving an emotionally disturbed child, but since the adult in charge is usually not adequately trained to handle them, we can do no more than bring such situations to the parent's attention for expert guidance.

The magic mixture

When it comes to a professional production, we have found that children are interested in everything and anything, provided the presentation is attractive. Every once in a while a script appears that contains the magic mixture that children's audiences respond to wholeheartedly. Such a script is Roberta Lanouette's adaptation of the *Golden Goose*. The medieval setting of the play allows free rein to the scenic designer and costumer for a vivid and fanciful mounting of the production. Dancing is introduced into the third act by a *mardi gras* and a celebration of the breaking of the evil spell which has prevented the Princess from laughing until the very close of the play. A dog and a camel belonging to the rug merchant are special favorites as portrayed by human actors inside their fur suits. The greatest charm of the play lies in the way in which the children themselves respond to the King's plea, "Is there anyone in the audience who thinks he can make the Princess laugh?" The King and the Princess leave the stage and walk up and down the aisle giving the children a chance to make funny faces and to try to tickle her funny bone.

At every performance the small fry clamor for the opportunity to become very directly involved in the telling of the story. Throughout the play the author wisely makes frequent use of the children's desire to "get into the act." In another sequence, for example, the King's messenger, with the inevitable trumpet, rehearses them in a bit so that they too may rise and proclaim their allegiance at the proper moment by shouting, "Hurrah for the King!"

In all theatre there is an uncertainty about the ultimate audience acceptance of the play, but in children's plays there are certain unique hazards. Scenes that adults respond to in rehearsal may be completely by-passed by a children's audience. Or a play may have real dramatic and literary merit and yet may fail to click with many of the children's needs and experiences. Again, the effectiveness of the most careful preparation in a production for youngsters is unpredictable; sometimes a scene that has been a headache to a director from the standpoint of dramatic structure will be saved at the opening by a trivial gimmick that unexpectedly catches the audience's fancy.

However, we have found that there are certain basic ingredients which are among the eternal favorites. Color, movement (and this includes dance), music and interesting sound effects, theatrical surprises (such as the cellar door going up in the air and sailing off in the *Wizard of Oz,* secret panels suddenly opening to display the hidden treasure in the *Emperor's New Clothes,* or the surprising transformation of a little boy into a wooden puppet in *No Strings on Me*) have a perpetual fascination for children of all ages.

Audience participation

Audience participation, properly handled, is a very important factor in Children's Theatre. Having the actors enter through the house and up the aisles to the stage in such instances as the final procession of the *Emperor's New Clothes,* or march from the stage into the theatre and out the rear doors to enter the gates of the Emerald City in the *Wizard of Oz,* delights them. They are thrilled at talking to the cast after the show and being given an oppor-

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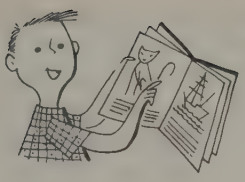

By Helen R. Plotz

Trash and treasure in children's reading

Do you remember the old bottlecaps and the shiny pebbles, the bits of ribbon and the tinfoil that your children brought you as offerings or saved in their pockets against some unspecified and unpredictable emergency? We know that these valueless objects, which the insensitive might term "junk," have great value at some time for all children; for some they are very important for a long time, for others, the phase, as we say, is a passing one. So it is, too, with some of the books children read. But we parents, who not only tolerate but respect the tinfoil, often lose our serenity when we see our children immersed in reading the "Series books," or entranced by what seems to us "trash." Before we condemn these books, or, more important, before we make a battleground of them, we might perhaps look into some of the reasons why children read them and some of the effects of such reading.

If we look back at our own childhood, most of us will recall the time when an epidemic of the Bobbsey Twins or the Motor Boys swept through the classroom. Suddenly, everyone was reading them, really everyone. And that is perhaps one of the reasons the series take such hold of our children. They provide common ground where the reader and the non-reader, the teacher's pet and the teacher's bane may meet together. In sociological jargon, we might say that reading the same books provides an opportunity for group integration. In simpler and more accurate language, this experience provides for sharing and swapping on the children's own terms. Each generation of boys and girls discovers its own common denominator, *The Little Colonel* or *Nancy Drew, The Rover Boys* or *Space Cadet;* it doesn't matter which, so long as all the children are reading together.

The reluctant reader takes heart, sometimes, when he finds himself reading a "real" book between "real" covers; the good reader swallows the series whole, usually with no more ill effect than if his binge were gastronomic instead of literary. Certainly, we would not want our children to be so integrated with the group that they lose their own separateness, their quirks and their dreams. If reading, even of the classics, produced a dead level of conformity, then we would indeed be in sad case. But reading remains an individual act and the communal experience it may provide will not impoverish even the most gifted of our children.

For the omnivorous reader, these ephemeral books do not often create problems. Most well-read adults, the kind we call "literary," or, at least, "literate," read quantities of all sorts of books in their childhood, some of them, indeed, more unsuited to their years than the alluring series. The sameness of the series, while pleasant and inviting for a while, provides its own antidote—as most children, sooner or later, discover for themselves.

The "escape" aspect of light reading is one in which we adults indulge ourselves, while decrying it for our children. The quantities of stereotyped fiction reviewed each summer for hammock reading, the formula stories of the popular magazines, even the plunging neck-

lines on the paper editions in the drugstores bear witness to the need that many thousands of us feel to get away from the unglamorous problems of everyday living and to lose ourselves in a world not so real. May not our children have these needs, too? Normally, a child today has so much to occupy him that he probably will not spend too much time in outer space. If he does we may want to look more thoughtfully, not at his reading, but at him and at the whole pattern of his life. A child too engrossed in escape reading is sometimes also in retreat from the world, and needs help with more than his reading tastes.

"Sometime" readers

But most children are neither omnivorous nor reluctant readers. They are "sometime" readers. If the time spent in reading is limited by other pressures, how can we help our children to make the most of the time they do have?

First let's remember that the joy of reading can be its own reward. This joy transcends the values of moral uplift or educational advancement. In our zeal to have our children love the highest when they see it, we are sometimes prone to equate the highest with the least pleasurable. Small wonder, then, that our children sometimes feel that "forbidden fruit a flavor has that lawful orchards mock." If reading even the "trashiest" books brings pleasure, can we then say that time is being wasted in their reading?

Our surest way to help our children with their reading interests is to watch what books they enjoy. Not the quality, but the pattern should be our clue. Some children, for example, have a seemingly insatiable appetite for family stories. A good many of the "Series books" have a setting of happy family life; too good, in fact, to be true. The insufferably hearty and never-tired father, the mother ready both with unlimited cookies fresh from an oven and unlimited wise counsel, the fun-loving children engaged in innocent pranks, are, of course, not very realistic pictures of ordinary life. Yet children do like to read about these "ideal" families. Emphatically, this does not suggest that we should attempt to remake ourselves and our families on the pattern of these families our children are so entranced by in the books. This enchantment does not imply that they are dissatisfied with their own homes. Indeed, even those who themselves have a rewarding family experience often like to compare their own lives with the lives they read about. We might, then, direct these children's attention to family stories that are warm in feeling and written with skill in characterization and incident. Such books as Laura Ingalls Wilder's *Little House* stories, Hazel Wilson's *Owen Boys* and Elizabeth Enright's *Melendy Family* are rich in family feeling and tradition, full of humor and love and understanding. The gift of one of these books may start a youngster off, not in another direction, but along a more rewarding road, especially if the gift is freely given—no strings of "Read this instead" attached.

The need for adventure

Other children are eager for adventure or for mystery. In this category, most of us think first of *Treasure Island,* as well we may; but how many of us remember that we were in our teens when we first read it? At a younger age, the dozens of thrillers that children read are offering them the action, the danger and the heroism they need to experience vicariously. From Prince Valiant to the story of King Arthur is but a step; the danger is, that in our eagerness to help children to take the step, we may ridicule their loved stories or present "better" books like so much medicine. Such writers as Stephen Meader and Walter Edmonds have something to offer far more thrilling than the exploits of the cardboard heroes of the "boys' books." Here, too, the books must be offered not as substitutes for "trash" or because they are "good," or have lived to be labeled "classics," but in their own right, because they are exciting, mysterious, real.

Some will never like reading

These are only two of the many categories of children's reading interests. Humor, fantasy, animal stories and many other special interests draw children to reading. Parenthetically, we must also note that there are many people,

both grownups and children, who do not respond deeply to fiction. These readers may, through science or mathematics, or more often than we suspect, through poetry, share the feeling of the watcher in the skies when a new planet swims into his ken. It may be, too, that some of us will be reached by no book, whatever its quality. For some, music or painting or crafts or machinery, or some other intellectual or spiritual experience may provide this awakening.

Standards change with the times

But if, in spite of tact, in spite of free access to the library, in spite of family reading, there are some children who persist, maddeningly, in their addiction to what we consider the lowest level of reading, what then? It may help to remind ourselves that standards vary from generation to generation in children's literature, as in all art forms. Who now would give the *Fairchild Family* or *The Wide, Wide World* to any child, or withhold *Tom Sawyer?* Yet, to many, only a few years ago, *The Wide, Wide World* was considered morally acceptable, while *Tom Sawyer* was not.

The pressing question, of course, remains unanswered; perhaps it is better so. What is a "trashy" book? The definition remains elusive. The dictionary describes trash as "something no longer useful." This may serve for a while, until we remember, half-guiltily, that Elsie Dinsmore, fainting from excess of piety, remains with us more vividly than Maggie Tulliver or that the adventures of *Boy Tar* may seem more interesting, even now, than the achievements of *Ivanhoe.*

Let them explore

Is there no difference, then, between trash and treasure? Of course there is. But, just as the child treasures his bottlecap, he may sometimes scorn a "real" jewel. What matters most is the transmission of experience. If we can share our own enthusiasms without coercion, and above all, if we can bide our time and keep the roads open, our children will find their way in the world of books. It may not be our way, but, then, did we not also discard some of the old ways and explore new ways, yet untried?

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By Ilka Lewin

Communication between the generations

Pleasant words, said King Solomon, are "sweet to the soul and health to the bones." But there is more to the art of communication than words

Every living person, from baby to great-grandpa, needs "love and food and a place to grow." Well-recognized, tangible needs, available to most of us, are bread, bed and a bathtub. We take it pretty much for granted that our families know they'll have breakfast tomorrow morning; their beds and baths whenever they want them. Alas, we also take it for granted that they naturally know they are loved. Often this is not so. To assume that members of our families *know* we love them is unwise. Those of us who know we are loved, want to be told so, nevertheless; and those who do not know, *need* to be told.

Good relations depend largely on communication. To some people communicating means only talking, but listening is equally important. And listening is actually a very effective way of conveying affection and interest. Real listening involves more than ears. Even four-year-old Sam knows when Mother is just "lending an ear," and when she is listening with her eyes, perhaps with parted lips, or even with her hands as she stops washing dishes and picks up the object he has brought to show her. When *all* of Mother listens, Sam feels that she's sharing his joy over the new bag of marbles, or his grief over the mysteriously shrunken balloon. He knows that Mother cares and that he can turn to her for sympathy and understanding. And so he becomes a little more important to himself, more confident.

Older children are even more aware of the difference between part-time listening and listening that makes the relating of pleasurable experiences a joy; the sharing of sorrow a comfort.

Parents who listen to their children with evident interest, who refrain from sarcasm and unfriendly criticism, are rewarded with the confidences their children pour out to them. And free communicating about everything and anything that interests them is part of what children need to feel secure and loved. Probably through no other channels can parents learn as much about the expectations and hopes of their children—also their qualms and fears.

Besides training ourselves for creative listening—listening to understand—it is vital that we provide opportunities for asking questions. Asking questions can also convey love, if they are questions that encourage every member of the family to talk about his particular interests and reactions. Well-adjusted children respond with pleasure to questions about their hobbies, pets, favorite school subjects, and to questions which provoke laughter. Less fortunate youngsters, who have been told too often and asked too seldom, may respond haltingly even to kindly questions. Whenever possible they should be led to tell about their strong points and successes. They need plenty of time to talk themselves out.

Questions, well-timed and not too many, may be of tremendous importance to an obviously troubled family member. In too many families, however, such a person is left to himself to "get over it:" the just-ignore-him method. This can be a really cruel approach and a way to convince the victim that he is indeed unloved.

Needless to say, FBI and you-answer-me-this-minute techniques should never be used within the family. And the privacy of one's thoughts should be respected.

How *do we talk?*

We can convey love, too, by asking for cooperation—cooperation which is evoked by talking with family members, not to or at them. And let us consider *how* we talk. If children are ordered about in angry, high-pitched voices; expected to comprehend and to comply immediately, we shut them away from ourselves. Yet we expect loving responses from them! We are more likely to get, at best, grudging obedience.

John's mother, however, really does get love from her son. With rare exceptions, she speaks to him as politely—and as warmly—as to her friends. She takes time to explain what she expects him to do. She shows him how to tackle a new activity, and then allows sufficient time for experimenting. When John fails, she assures him that it took her three weeks to learn to make a bed. John gets praise for even partial successes—plus a smile or a pat. Besides, whenever possible, John is given a choice: "While I'm getting dinner, will you please hang up your coat or put your toys away?" When on occasion he solemnly assures Mother that these chores "don't appeal to me today," she doesn't force him. Blessed with sympathy, she is satisfied with less than one hundred percent cooperation. And because John knows how he stands with Mother, on other days he responds with a cheerful "Okay!"

Many problems between parents and teenagers might be solved satisfactorily if parents treated their youngsters with at least as much cordiality and respect as they do their next-door neighbors; if they asked their opinions more frequently, and discussed differences freely and in a friendly fashion, even when unable to reach agreement. In all face-to-face communicating, the acceptability of words *per se* is perhaps of least importance. How we sound and look conveys more clearly than words our approval or disapproval; acceptance or rejection; love or hate. To King Solomon's "Pleasant words are like the honeycomb: sweet to the soul and health to the bones," we might add, and so are pleasant voices and kindly faces.

Not only should we encourage our young people to give their opinions but should accept their challenge of *our* opinions without resentment or the arbitrary "mother-knows-best" or "because-I-say-so" reaction. "You may have something there," or "I never realized how that might strike you, but I see what you mean:" such words and attitudes do much to lessen anxiety and resentment. Indeed, they make the acceptance of parental suggestions much easier, especially where these are backed by persuasive reasons.

Both quiet and activity can be shared

There may be times when keeping quiet will turn children toward us. Listening to music, or simply watching the kitten's antics may give the sense of sharing which is such an important part of real communication. Playing together is fine, too—if the parent is *really* playing and not just making a forced effort to be a "pal." And by all means laughing together—that indispensable link in the chain of good family communications. Apropos of laughter, it is noteworthy that parents who laugh easily at themselves usually have children who can laugh at themselves comfortably, too.

For better understanding within the family, we should look also to the quality of our responses. How do we respond to a bid for our time, money or attention? Let's suppose that Willie asks Mother to play Pick-Up-Sticks right after breakfast. If she snaps back with "I have other things to do!" Willie feels angry or rebuffed. But if Mother answers "I'd like to Willie, as soon as I can, but first I have to wash the dishes and make the beds," Willie can bide his time without resentment.

Similarly, Barbara will wait more patiently

and willingly for her new pumps if Mother explains the need for delay: "Your white pumps are a bit shabby, dear, I know, but we can't stretch our budget any further right now. Next month you'll be able to buy that pretty pair with the bows." How much better than: "We can't afford shoes now; you'll have to wait."

Now what about the non-verbal response? As we grow older we often lose the capacity for spontaneous gestures of affection—the quick hug, or pat of encouragement, or kiss for no reason at all but a sudden rush of warm feelings. Or, if we haven't lost the impulse to do these things, we deny it expression. However, an awareness of our inhibitions or our thoughtlessness, perhaps, and plenty of practice in the use of non-verbal responses, may ultimately help us to fuller, more loving communications.

In all family communications, the parents usually set the pattern. If father and mother "snap out of it" promptly; if both are willing to apologize and to accept responsibility for their behavior; and if they remain on civil talking terms even when not seeing eye-to-eye, their children are not likely to steel themselves with the "I'm-mad-and-I'm-going-to-stay-mad-and-mum" attitude.

Obviously the reverse is equally true, and parents who share and discuss their various interests, who have not lost the knack of expressing affection for each other and who help each other cope with daily problems, have already established the basis of good communication with their children.

A basic need of all people

Communication is a basic need of all people whatever their relationship to each other. Good communication with our children, as a part of our care and love for them, is an essential to which we should give at least as much thought and attention as we do to good diet and housing. We must learn to express our ideas and affection more freely, and practice the art of responding and of evoking responses from others. And above all we must seek ways to keep the lines of communication open, so that the members of our families may reach each other with the fullness of their understanding.

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By Glenn R. Hawkes
and Hilda Knepper Cobb

Science says—

Children's understanding of the father's role has important implications for their future

Traditionally fathers have played a very authoritative role in the American family scene. "Right and proper" behavior for a father, as well as for other members of the family, followed an accepted pattern, with which all were expected to comply. Today society is discarding its traditional family pattern and moving toward the idea of companionship as the best basis for family relations. In this "new" family the father remains important, but in a less clearly defined way. Unfortunately, while companionship gradually was being substituted for the authoritarian pattern, changes in our economic system meant that the father no longer filled his role of provider at home and in plain sight of his children. In the past, father's part in the family life, whether as breadwinner, guardian, playmate or disciplinarian, was well understood. But today he spends much of his time away from home, engaged in activities which are difficult for the child to comprehend. Consequently, children are often confused as to their father's function—what he is there for, and what may be expected of him.

The following study was made in an attempt to explore the conceptions a group of kindergarten children had formed of the father's role in the family.*

A pictorial interview was selected as a means of gathering information from the children. The subjects interviewed were fifty-four white children enrolled in two kindergarten groups in one public school in a midwestern town of 25,000. Line drawings were made to illustrate the following concepts: (1) father's role in parent-child relationships, (2) father's role in providing for the family, (3) father's role in parent-child-child relationships—that is to say, the child's concept of the father in relation to other children besides himself, and (4) father's role as a disciplinarian. The drawings were purposely indefinite, so that each child could interpret the ambiguous figures as being himself and his father. The drawings were presented to the child with a brief explanation as to who the figures represented and the direction, "Tell me about this picture." The children were urged to respond as fully as possible and all responses were recorded.

In the use of the pictorial interview the research worker relied on the child's ability to be stimulated by pictures. As the subject viewed the figures in the picture he told what came to mind regarding the situation depicted. The worker was there only to help him find words, to make certain he identified himself with the line drawing and to urge him on. Prior to the introduction of the picture the child was made to feel "free" with the worker and his equipment so his responses would be natural.

*Published as Journal paper J-2176 of the Iowa Agricultural Experiment Station, Ames, Iowa, Project No. 1171.
This article is based on the M.S. thesis of Knepper, Hilda, *Conceptions of a Group of Kindergarten Children of the Father's Role in the Family*, Iowa State College, 1951.

The interviews were conducted in a small, comfortable room adjacent to the kindergarten room. The children seemed to look forward to their opportunity to tell what they knew about "daddys." In nearly all cases, unless there was a lack of verbal facility, a wealth of information was provided by the subject.

After the interviews were recorded they were evaluated according to the child's understanding of the father role depicted in each picture. To give each child a score, a rating scale of five rankings, or degrees, of understanding was set up for each of the pictures.

The findings showed a wide range among kindergarten children in their understanding of the father's role in the family—such a wide range that it became impossible to draw a word picture of a father as seen by a child of this age. Some trends in understanding were revealed, however. These children seemed to have a better understanding of the father's role as provider than of the other roles investigated. Another more easily understood role might be expected to be the father as disciplinarian; however, these children did not see the father in this role. Whether this was the result of the interview, or whether fathers are not playing this role as much as they did in the past, cannot be stated on the basis of this investigation.

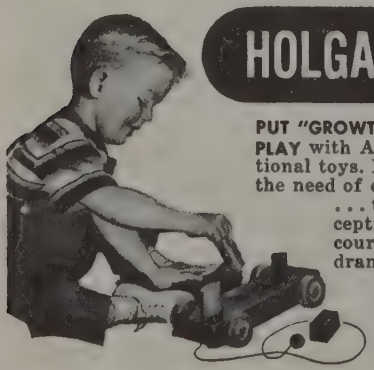
These children had the most difficult time understanding the father's relationships to other children. This part of the father role may be more clearly understood as the child matures or possibly he needs help in comprehending this relationship more fully.

The scores given to the children were compared according to sex, age, adjustment to group and father's occupation. The only statistically significant difference was found between occupational groups. The children of professional families had a better understanding of the father's role than children of nonprofessional families in this sample.

This study would seem to indicate that children of this age do not have a very broad understanding of the father's role in the family. The lack of contact with the modern father has implications which many do not realize. For instance, if it is true that children of both sexes learn how to act and react on the basis of their experiences with adults, then one wonders how today's children can function adequately when they grow up if the father-child relationship has had so little meaning to them. Possibly, similar studies of children in other ethnic groups may reveal that the father concept is slow in developing; or such studies might show that the economic and social upheaval of our society is responsible for the child's limited understanding of his father's contribution to family life.

Studies of this type which reveal the concepts children are forming should help educators plan for better interpretation of the father role—as well as other family roles—to children and adults. It would seem vitally important that children who are growing up to form families of their own have a clear concept of the father's part.

Research for this study was done under the direction of Associate Professor Glenn R. Hawkes of the Dept. of Child Development, Iowa State College.



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Parents' Questions

These questions are selected and discussed by the Child Study Association staff, and the answers written by its various members

When should parents step in?

Since we are apartment dwellers, my three-year-old son must go to the park for outdoor play. He is a friendly, busy little boy, but even at home is the kind who gets upset when things go wrong and wants his father or me to come to the rescue. Naturally, his troubles are greater in the park where he must share space and playthings. When another child tries to take a sand scoop, ball or something else from him he hangs on for dear life with tears running down his cheeks. The only thing I've found to do about it is to move from the scene of trouble to another play space; but I realize this is a makeshift solution. How can I help him?

Mrs. M.H.

Young children need lots of help in learning to play together. They need grown ups around who, without interfering, understand what the various children are trying to do in their play, who occasionally come up with some good ideas for carrying it out, but who've learned, too, when to keep hands off.

From what you say about your son, I wonder if you have given him enough firsthand experience of the sort of failure that's the natural result of being only three years old. He needs to know the limits of his own strength and knowledge. If, as you say, you or his father rescue him whenever he is up against something too hard, he will be slow to develop ingenuity and skills, or the ability to compromise or accept philosophically the fact that he can't always succeed. If a chair, for example, is too heavy for him to move; if a string he's using as a "hose" is too short; or a box too large to fit into a space, first give him a chance to find it out for himself and to work out a solution, before you offer suggestions for ways around the difficulty.

Take an interest in what he's doing but encourage him to solve the problem himself.

Sometimes, children get a distorted view of their own importance by being given their choice about too many things. Then they react violently when other children don't consult them. If they live in a home where a certain number of routine things are decided for them, they're likely to be prepared to accept the demands of other children.

Of course, there are times when your child needs your support such as when another child attacks him or snatches his toys. But your problem is to help him, little by little, to find his own ways to defend himself.

Acting like a grown-up

My three-year-old is always begging to be allowed to use my red nail polish and I've let her do it once or twice. But she's not easily satisfied and often helps herself from my dressing table drawer. Naturally it looks ridiculous and in very bad taste, and I feel embarrassed when my friends see it on her.

Mrs. E.S.S.

It's natural for children to imitate their parents in all sorts of ways and little girls like to imitate their mothers especially. Red is a

color beloved of children and doubtless she wants to have "pretty" nails like yours. Mothers are quite rightly pleased when small daughters turn to cooking or cleaning, or when they enjoy attractive clothes. Isn't your child's wish for nail polish really much the same sort of thing—an attempt to act and feel like a real grown-up lady? If you look at it this way, you'll probably feel less embarrassed in front of your friends. Perhaps if you don't object so strenuously and actually show your sympathy by painting her nails yourself now and then, she'll accept it better if occasionally you tell her definitely, "Not this time." The chances are all that she'll give it up of her own accord after she's had her fill of it.

The poor sport

At seven, my son is still a pretty poor sport. You expect little kids to cry when they don't "win" or don't get the toy they want, but Ronnie's friends seem to have caught on to the idea of fair play by now, and it is awfully embarrassing when he sulks after losing a game or tries to claim a better score at something than he really got. He makes excuses, too—"I don't feel so good," or "you play the rules all wrong." For his own sake, I'd like him to understand the importance of fair play before he gets to be known as a poor sport and is left out of things. Have you any suggestions?

MRS. L.E.B.

In the phrase "for his own sake," you have probably suggested the best approach. You have implied, too, without realizing it, that you may have been approaching the problem up to now with one eye on the neighbors rather than concentrating squarely on the boy himself, and the best way of helping him overcome his difficulties. That's natural enough. Wherever other people are in a position to pass judgment, our pride is at stake, too. But remember that "good sportsmanship," on which we all put so much stress, is something that has to be *learned;* it doesn't just come "naturally." For some children this kind of learning is much harder than for others and it is no reflection either on you or Ronnie if he is a little slower at it than some of his friends. It may be, too, that a child who takes his time learning to be a good sport finally gets a better idea of the whole concept of fairness, good nature in the face of defeat, etc., than those who take to it more readily.

Perhaps among Ronnie's friends, good sportsmanship isn't really good sportsmanship but is used to excuse extreme roughness and even cruelty on the ground that the victim should be a "good sport" and grin and bear it. Be sure you know what the circumstances really are.

But even more important is your forming some estimate of what may be back of your son's inability to accept even minor defeats "in his stride," as it were. Perhaps some children actually have, from the beginning, a lower "frustration tolerance" than others. Perhaps, too, if Ronnie had more satisfactions of other kinds, such as the development of skills in non-competitive fields, in academic success, in quiet home friendships with one or two others instead of a group, in feeling secure and appreciated by his parents—these experiences might help him find strength to take the hard knocks of games and tough play in better part.

Meanwhile, though it definitely isn't constructive to make him feel you are ashamed of him when he quits because he is losing, you will have to let him know, too, that you are sorry that he hasn't learned yet to stick it out. Remember always that this boy's own conscience and the healthy side of him disapprove of his playing the baby—and he expects you to support this standard.

When youngsters earn "big money"

If poverty creates problems, so, it seems does prosperity! Our son, at fifteen, does neighborhood jobs after school and week-ends and earns what seems to me a lot of money. So do some of his friends. Since they don't have to contribute to their own living expenses, they spend this surplus in ways that are sometimes foolish and at worst dangerous. Right now they're pooling resources to buy a jalopy—

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one of the boys is sixteen and can drive. They waste a lot of money, too, at pin-ball machines. They all seem to be going hog wild, buying whatever they want. What, if anything, can we, his parents, do about it?

MR. AND MRS. L.A.

What may seem like a large sum of money to you may not actually be large in view of today's prices. And it doesn't seem much to your son in relation to the things he wants to buy. Perhaps you aren't quite clear yourself whether it's your son's independence you're worried about or the fact that he is spending money wastefully or dangerously. We all have complicated feelings about money. The freedom from parental authority that it brings is only one angle of it. How much freedom your son is ready for is a question you must deal with first on its merits. If part-ownership of a car seems to you really beyond his present sense of responsibility, then you must make a decision accordingly—one, let's hope, that you can arrive at together. At fifteen some boys are quite grown-up and perhaps ready for more responsibility than parents think. Is this true of your son or is he somewhat immature for his years? We sometimes tend to think of our growing children as younger than they are because the situation in which they live often cheats them of the responsibilities they might be able to assume under other circumstances.

What do the boys intend to do with the car? Will they really drive it? And where? What kind of a boy is the sixteen-year-old who can get a license? All these questions need consideration. But in addition, the boys undoubtedly do need help in the wise management of money and in understanding that it carries with it definite responsibilities. Perhaps your son has other hobbies or interests for which he might be willing to use some of his money. You might start him and some of the other youngsters in the same situation on some community project out of which they could get a real sense of achievement. It needs a few ideas and perhaps a big push from grownups to get such things started.

No amount of moralizing about extravagance or waste will be very effective if your family is generally lavish with money and your living scale high. Nor will any artificially created "responsibilities" be very appealing. But it's possible that this isn't the case. Perhaps you actually need to economize. Then there may be some real family expenses that are taking sacrifice and careful planning and to which he might quite honestly and realistically be asked to contribute. Young people need something *real* to work for, and there is a genuine challenge to all of us to provide just that. Perhaps you can talk this over with your son, his friends and others in your community.

What part are you taking

in planning your community's

MENTAL HEALTH WEEK?

May 3 - 9

Statement of the Ownership, Management, and Circulation required by the Act of Congress of August 24, 1912, as amended by the Acts of March 3, 1933, and July 2, 1946 (Title 39, United States Code, Section 233), of CHILD STUDY, published four times a year, at New York, for October 1, 1952.

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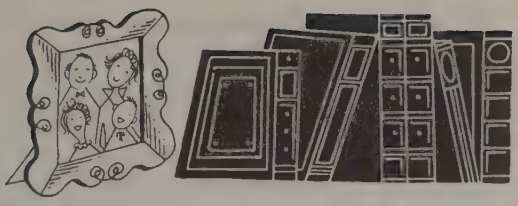

Book reviews

Don't Be Afraid of Your Child

By Hilde Bruch, M.D.

New York: Farrar, Straus & Young, 1952. $3.75.

Thoughful students and practitioners of psychology and psychiatry have become more and more aware of a problem raised by the very nature of their work and their findings. These findings show that people learn not through intellectual perceptions alone, but through relationships and experiences; it therefore becomes necessary not only to evaluate what constitutes a sound body of knowledge, but to explore the ways in which such knowledge may be absorbed and applied.

In this situation a book like Dr. Bruch's might have offered us a step forward by analyzing constructively the goals of our conscious educational efforts, and by helping us to recognize the enormous variability in motives, needs, flexibility and unconscious development which determine the ability of each individual to learn and grow. Regrettably, Dr. Bruch fails to do this. She seems to deny that there is any sound body of knowledge which can safely be offered to help us gain a better understanding of ourselves, and her general approach is a negative one of criticism and debunking, in which the issues she raises are not resolved.

Yet much of what the author says has significance for leaders in parent education today. Her discussion of current attitudes toward pregnancy, childbirth and child care deals with material that is undeniably vital to parents. Dr. Bruch describes with justification the burden of guilt put on modern parents and the tendency to give glib prescriptions for children's healthy development, such as "give them enough love." She points out, too, that the current insistence on natural childbirth and breast feeding gives little consideration to variations in the reactions of individual mothers and makes an important point in describing excessive permissiveness as a way of avoiding parental responsibility. Her recognition of the mistake of interpreting children's behavior from an adult point of view, which may be entirely opposed to the child's, is challenging. And her discussion of parental attitudes towards sex should also stimulate further thinking.

It is necessary, however, to point out some significant limitations of this book. There are conflicting opinions about every subject considered, but only one side is presented by Dr. Bruch. The reader familiar with present trends in the field of child care will realize that there is another side, and that these issues are not so easy to resolve, since there is some validity to each point of view. Nor does the book itself present much factual proof of Dr. Bruch's contentions. The reader, therefore, would do well to consider and weigh the material in the light of all his background knowledge and arrive at his own judgment of the author's interpretation.

The book has a very simple and conversational approach which belies the importance of the concepts under consideration. As an introductory guide for parents it might be misleading because it deprecates some of the greatest gains in the study of child development, and the author's condemning attitude toward the fields of psychiatry and psychoanalysis may confuse the thinking of the inexperienced parent.

Stressing that the mother should use her own judgment and not rely on any stereotyped approach to the correct upbringing of children, Dr. Bruch questions many of the currently accepted trends of child rearing. She doubts seriously the desirability of having the father assume so many of the duties of every-day care; she questions the premium placed on a child's being an "ordinary" member of the group. It is very interesting, and perhaps paradoxical, that with all her criticism of the contribution of psychiatry, Dr. Bruch's closing rule of conduct for parents is "To thine own self be true." Yet it is surely one of the fundamental aims of psychiatry to help us know ourselves. Intuitive self-knowledge may be part of the answer.

That it is not the complete solution would seem to be clearly indicated by the fact that many parents have felt the need to look for other sources of help.

JANET E. CHASE,
MARY K. JONES
For the Bibliography Committee

Personality in the Making— The Fact-Finding Report of the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth

Edited by Helen Leland Witmer and Ruth Kotinsky.
New York: Harper & Bros., 1952. $4.50.

This fascinating volume marks a new high in Conference reporting. Its dour subtitle, "Fact-Finding Report of the Midcentury White House Conference on Children and Youth," is apt to create a negative impression, yet it actually is a lively book which will provide rewarding reading for inquiring parents.

Helen Witmer and Ruth Kotinsky have performed a herculean task in bringing together in concise, stimulating and readable form the scores of contributions submitted in the preparation of the Conference. Whereas the materials produced by previous White House Conferences did not go far beyond the bookshelves of libraries and professional workers, the present volume will appeal to many parents as well, and provide them with much useful information.

While the book is no compendium for quick reference, still it is so well-organized that the interested parent will easily find the desired information. The introduction gives the overall framework of the Conference, which had as its theme *The Healthy Personality,* and which tried to explore this subject with particular emphasis on the qualitative aspects of human relations. It is here that we find the simple and yet profound definition—"to be happy *and* responsible is to be healthy in personality" —which was a guidepost for the Conference, and which the authors have related to some of the basic values and assumptions in American culture today. In so doing they have provided materials that will be invaluable to both individual parents and national policy-makers for years to come.

Part one of the book deals with our basic knowledge of the development of the healthy personality, part two with the social institutions through which we carry on the various programs designed to build, strengthen and support healthy personality development. Part one, for instance, gives us, in Chapter IV, a sweeping cultural view of "The Importance of Parent-Child Relations," while part two considers the ways in which good relationships can be fostered within the institution of "The Family" (Chapter IX).

There is an excellent chapter on "The Influence of Physical Limitations" which is built on the premise that "there is no exact line separating the normal from the handicapped" and that for the child "it is not the handicap itself but the reaction to the handicap of the people who are significant to him emotionally that counts for most."

The fourth chapter gives us new understanding of the "mutuality of parent-child relations" with especial emphasis on the fact that the process of adjustment is not a one-way street. Yet in this, as in other chapters, the authors point out the lack (or at least the insufficiency) of research which would explore the validity of some widely accepted assumptions. With regard to self-demand feeding, for instance, which recently has been impressed on parents as yet another "categorical imperative," the authors cite the scarcity of supporting data and add that one might cautiously assume that here, as in other respects, it is the parental attitude associated with this procedure, rather than the procedure in itself, which is significant.

The chapter on "Religion as an Aid to Healthy Personality Development" (VII) and the corresponding chapter in part two on "The Church and the Synagogue," make a distinct contribution, with objective analyses of the ethical and spiritual values of our culture and their basic role in personality development.

Altogether, one feels that this book is far more than a "report," for it achieves almost encyclopedic stature in presenting authoritative and comprehensive data on so many aspects of child development.

GUNNAR DYBWAD

Family experience

Continued from page 5

In the third place, we can re-examine the content of our own class-conditioned attitudes. If our ambition for our children is very strong but generalized ("You may do almost anything so long as you are successful in it"), are we thereby teaching our children to look down on anyone who does not see "making good" in the same way he does? Even if we do not over-protect our children in any obvious sense ("We encourage them to assume all the responsibility they can"), do we over-protect them from any contact with different patterns of family living? And do we realize that, more important than any particular content which we may try to protect, is the virtue of being ready to examine its framework? For if we do not examine our own attitudes and understand their bases, they operate compulsively, indiscriminately and without question. Thus they become noncorrectable. But they can, in fact, be changed if their roots are analyzed.

An ethical problem

Fourth, we can recognize that much of our problem is ethical in character, and that our attempts to solve it must, therefore, include ethical reflection and action. An ethical angle is involved whether the patterns of other families threaten our basic values or not, but the nature of the ethical element is different in these two situations. If the patterns of other families do threaten our basic values (e.g., criminal actions, lack of sanitation, etc.), it is our responsibility to support the whole community as it tries to get such families to change their values at these threatening points. But if the tastes and values of other families (while differing from ours) do not actually injure our basic values, it is our responsibility to understand and accept those differences, and to teach our children to do so.

If the boys in a neighborhood family are prone to near-delinquent acts, this fact threatens the whole neighborhood. Acceptance in the sense of saying passively, "Well, that's the way they are," is no solution. Obviously private recrimination is no answer either. But our family can join with other families, with social agencies, with the court, to help alter these threatening patterns. It is not ethical to remain passive. It is ethical to seek the most understanding form of community action.

The ethical angle of the situation is quite different, however, if a family is sloppy in dress or household (but not contagiously unsanitary), or if it has no regular meal hours for children, or if its members go to a different church or no church at all. These things may touch us in some respects. But they do not threaten our own basic values. Therefore, we are ethical in relation to them only when we are attempting to understand and accept the people and families having these differences.

Now, it is not always easy to tell the difference between values which threaten our basic values and values which simply fail to agree with ours. To make this distinction demands the best thought and reflection of which we are capable. Except for unimportant things, the answers are not automatic. But if we do admit to ourselves that the problem is ethical in character, that what we must engage in is ethical reflection, then we are halfway toward the necessary distinctions. We shall be no less keen to protect our basic values when these are genuinely threatened. But we shall be less tempted to ride off in all directions against differences which simply happen to disagree.

Potential strengths

Finally, we believe there are certain potential strengths in upper-middle class standards themselves which can be drawn on to the benefit of the whole community of families. We have previously indicated how much these patterns tend to concentrate on "making good." Plainly, this may mean something very narrow. But it may also mean something which is in fact very good—becoming a "real person," in Fosdick's phrase, or a "real family."

But if we are to learn, as people and as families, how to be ourselves in this sense, we must always teach our children something more than any particular content. Any particular thing which they learn is always less important than that they should know how to learn when they confront the *next* situation. To "make

good," therefore, is to learn how to go on learning —about oneself, one's own family and about other people and families who may differ very much. It is learning how not to be panicked into retreating from the effort to become one's self. It is learning a deeper standard than conformity (but one which does not mean rebellion, either). This is the essence of ethical education.

One may teach a certain ethical concept with the utmost effectiveness. But if this teaching is not accompanied by an increasing learning *how* to learn when confronted with the next situation, then it has partially failed. The child who is considerate of other children in a way proper to age eight would be very inconsiderate if he applied the same approach at age fourteen. At eight we have to teach not fixed rules of considerateness, but instead how to learn about essential considerateness when the situations change, both outwardly and in the child himself.

Change is not rejection

The learning-how-to-learn approach is not an "anything goes" notion which denies the importance of basic principles. Sometimes parents have been unnecessarily frightened lest their children get an idea (about God, for instance) which will later have to be changed. This is nonsense. Children should change their idea of God at least once a year; perhaps, like seeing the dentist, twice. What they ought to learn is that changing an idea is not rejecting everything that lies behind it. Instead, it is penetrating more deeply what one previously saw only in small degree. One learns *how* to change ideas precisely in order to get closer to basic principles.

This learning-how-to-learn is very important for understanding and accepting the varieties of family experience. We do not teach our children simply to accept certain families and not others. We teach them, instead, how to learn to make distinctions. That is, we teach them how to get at the basic principles upon which such distinctions *can* and *must* be made, as against the superficial and mistaken principles on the basis of which often they *are* made. In so doing, we testify to our conviction of the reality of the basic principles.

A half century ago William James implied, in *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, that understanding of our own faith could be enriched by an understanding of the varieties of religious experience of others. Such understanding is not just a duty. It is a potentiality. More recently, we have discovered that the same principle holds true for many other kinds of individual experience, including the relationship between ourselves and our children. There is no reason to believe the situation different with regard to the varieties of family experience. We may strive to understand and accept them, on our own behalf and that of our children, not simply because it is our duty, but because we have also the ethical responsibility and challenge of thereby enriching ourselves, our children and our families.

The adopted child

Continued from page 8

ers more willing to answer his questions. This leaves him exposed to the great danger that the attitudes he meets regarding adoption may be destructive and unhealthy.

When a parent-child relationship is disturbed and the child is showing behavior disorders, the factor of adoption can play an important part. This part, however, is usually of a secondary and complicating nature, and almost never is found to be the nucleus of the difficulty. Frequently, however, in such situations, either a parent or a child or both will focus attention on the fact of adoption, mistakenly blaming it for the disturbance in their relationships. In the quest for reasons, questions are posed by the adult such as: "Why must he always goad me into spanking him?" and by the child, who asks, "Why can't I ever stay up?" "Why doesn't my daddy ever take me anywhere?" The questions themselves may be such oversimplifications or distortions of the situation that no accurate answer can be given.

It may actually be easier for parents and children in this situation to deal with a fact which can be agreed upon and acknowledged, than with conflicting thoughts, wishes and interpretations. It may be a temporary solution

to the parent to say "Of course, these are the problems of adoption" or to the child to conclude "Now I know why she doesn't love me; she's not my real mommy." These, however, are not explanations; they are respites from the job of unravelling the problems and restoring a parent-child relationship which, by the very fact of adoption, proves the parents' desire for the child and by the very fact that he is a child, proves his need for parents.

The easy answer

Where a struggle for dominance between parent and child is under way, it may be easier for both to blame it all on the fact that the child is adopted, thus avoiding an examination of the relationship itself. Except in the case of a child who has been placed in a succession of homes before arriving at his final adoptive home, the types of behavior difficulties and parent-child disorders differ in no essential manner from those found in family units in which the parent-child bond is biological. The child who feels rejected may try to find a rational explanation for this feeling in the fact that "I'm not their real child." But he feels rejected either because he is in actuality rejected or because he misinterprets actions and attitudes shown to him. Sibling rivalry can grow to destructive proportions between two adopted children, or between an adopted and non-adopted child if the total situation permits, just as it may with true siblings. The explanation that it is "all due to adoption" may effectively block examination and correction of the causes of the difficulty. Where there is a poor relationship between parent and child, genuine confusion as to the meaning of adoption may be difficult to iron out, since the child may have little confidence that his questions will be considered seriously and answered truthfully. The parent who solves other issues by evasion, will be expected by the child to evade these questions, too. On the other hand, an honest handling of these questions may be the turning point toward the building of a new, more honest relationship between the child and his parents.

To sum up, the adoption of a child is an event of great significance for both parent and child. It is important that its meaning to the parent be defined, and not be either underestimated or permitted to be given an undue importance. The child, too, needs to be informed of the facts of his relationship to his family and why and how he became a member. His interests, ideas and confusions will change from age to age in this, as in other regards. If his questions are answered neither with over-insistence on problems nor with refusal to face them, he will be able to master this knowledge as constructively as he masters other aspects of growing up.

The "Wonderful Story"

Recently published, *The Wonderful Story of How You Were Born*, by Sidonie Matsner Gruenberg, former director of the Child Study Association, has been described by reviewers as a book that gives the facts of conception and childbirth in simple, warm terms which put both the adult reader and the child listener at ease. The pleasant family atmosphere is also stressed in the illustrations by Hildegard Woodward, and a guide inside the jacket helps parents to use the book with children from five to eight. Published by Hanover House, the book is also available from the Child Study Association at $2.00 a copy.

Southern Regional Conference

Interesting evidence of the effort to examine the needs of children on a regional basis, and to increase awareness of the needs outside the large metropolitan centers, is the recent organization of the Southern Regional Conference on Children Under Six. Representatives from thirteen Southern states sit on the executive board, and the new group will seek to promote public kindergartens, support legislation affecting young children and raise health and educational standards throughout the region. The Conference will hold its fourth meeting in Daytona Beach, Florida, April 16-18. Further information may be secured by writing to Miss Susan Williams, 3 Chestnut Street, Sumter, S. C.

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Twins: myth & reality

Continued from page 13

on an errand. When they arrived there the storekeeper looked at them in surprise. "What has happened?" he asked them. "You don't look like twins today." Suddenly realizing how they were dressed, they reacted as if they had done something very dreadful. They felt disgraced. These were twins who never before had gone anywhere unless they were dressed alike, unless they looked and therefore felt like twins.

The time will probably come when the children will prefer to wear different clothing for most occasions. In case they do not of their own accord decide to dress differently, they may need your encouragement. You might start by suggesting different hair styles; yes, even a Mohawk! But once they have made the break they will be well on their way toward feeling themselves as separate entities. You will be interested in the reaction of your friends and their children to these changes in the twins. Some may regret that they no longer look like twins (that twin fantasy is very persistent) but in many there will be expressions of relief: "Now we can tell them apart!"

Differentiation is not easy

Differentiation of the twins does not occur as easily as you may think, even when you have done everything on your part to facilitate it. As far as identical twins are concerned, the twinship exerts a strong force in the direction of holding them together, of making them want to remain identical. They are aware that their alikeness is what distinguishes them from other people. Moreover they are constantly being reminded of their identity by those who cannot tell them apart. They are often told of near or real mix-ups which leave everyone forever doubtful as to which twin is which. This may make them uncertain of their own identities and increase the tendency to cling to one another as though to lose the twin would be to lose a part of one's self.

The closeness of this relationship is well illustrated by a little incident which occurred with five-year-old twin girls. They were dressing for a party. As the mother finished tying the bow on Jane's dress and straightened her barrettes, Jane said to Joan, who was already dressed, "Stand over there so I can see how I look."

Personality development depends a good deal on the child's relationship to others and his identification with them, particularly with his parents. Having each other, identical twins have less need for a close relationship to others. They never feel quite so alone, so threatened by the arrival of another child in the family, or so left out by the father's and mother's attention to each other—they have their twinship. Moreover, what one twin may be afraid to tackle alone, together they will accomplish without hesitation. Their "oneness" is a defense, a protection against the world. This is the reality in the advantage of the twinship which is felt by those who wish to have a twin. However, advantageous as it may seem to others, as far as the twins themselves are concerned it is apt to be a deterring factor in the development of individual personalities.

Making friends

As the twins learn to use their "oneness" for a defense, other children may feel that they have an unfair advantage. It is as though the twins were continuously injecting an editorial "we" into decisions as to what is to be played and how. Most children do not want to play with someone—or two—when they are never permitted to be boss. Somehow small children find it difficult in any case to be good friends with two at once. When those two are twins, children seem to find them difficult to accept until they are able to distinguish one from the other. Apparently they need to feel that they like one better than the other in order for a real friendship to develop.

The tendency for twins to cling to each other is particularly noticeable when they are first introduced into a group situation. Nursery school teachers have often observed that although twins as a rule get along well with other children and don't have the usual difficulties in learning to share toys, they are very slow in forming attachments.

One way in which parents have sought to

help each twin to make his own friends has been to try to separate them in school. If it is discussed with the twins before hand and they are prepared for it, it is a good idea to put them in separate sections of the same grade at about the time they reach first grade. During the first year or two you may find that this does not seem to make any great difference in their relationship to other children. After all, they will be spending their play time together on the playground and eating their lunches together, walking home or taking the bus together. But the important thing is that the stage is set so that there is an opportunity for them to feel themselves as individuals in their relationships to others whenever they are ready for it.

There is a great deal that parents can do at this stage to encourage each twin to spend time with friends of his own choosing. When it seems clear that one of the twins has found someone with whom he would like to be good friends it will be helpful if special plans can be made for the other twin. At times another child may hesitate to invite the twins because he may have a preference for one of them or both together may seem overwhelming; or, as in the case of overnight invitations, the home cannot accomodate both of them. Parents of twins should not hesitate to discuss frankly such situations with the parents of their children's friends. Other children and their parents need to know that you welcome opportunities for each twin to experience his acceptance as an individual. When such occasions do arise the uninvited twin will need to be reminded that some time a similar opportunity will present itself for him. Even if "his turn" seems too far-off to be comforting at the moment, it will help if he can be recompensed by being given some special attention. However, just the fact of being—if only temporarily—an only child, or at least the only one of that age, may bring sufficient satisfaction in itself.

Jealousy and rivalry

In the case of Helen and Mary, Mary found it much easier to make friends. Consequently, she was ready and anxious to go on her own separate way before Helen was. She became very resentful. "Helen is always tagging after me. Whenever I make a friend she has to come along too, and now Marion likes her better than she does me." In this particular set of twins this rivalry about friends ushered in a period of intense jealousy. Mary openly hated Helen and was intensely critical of her.

The appearance of jealousy at this point was a sign that these twins were beginning to feel their individuality. I do not mean to imply that jealousy had never before existed. An impartial observer will be aware that twins experience the same jealousies and rivalries as other brothers and sisters, and in some cases these feelings may be even more intense. Young children are able to feel conflicting feelings almost simultaneously. At one moment the twins will obviously feel very close to each other, will gang up against another child or a parent; in the next instant they may be going at each other tooth and nail.

With identical twins it sometimes happens that during the period from about five to nine years the intensity of their rivalry will diminish so that it is almost imperceptible. It is also during these years that they are inclined to be most closely identified with one another; in other words, the more intense their identification the stronger the tendency will be to repress all jealousy and rivalry. It is only when differentiation begins to take place that these hateful feelings appear again in full force.

Twins and their siblings

We quite frequently find that when twins are not able to express their rivalry in relation to each other they will take these feelings out on a brother or sister. They may each alternate between trying to monopolize the brother's attention one moment and being very mean to him the next. How other children in the family feel toward twins is typified by the youngster who called one twin Nora and the other More Nora. As this same child grew up she seemed to be hyperactive and overly belligerent. It was as though she felt she had to meet life with fists flying in order to hold her own against this double threat. She seemed to have a great need to attach herself in close friendship to another child her own age, particularly

to a boy, as though to secure a twin for herself—a boy twin, something her sisters did not have.

In families where there are children older than the twins an older child may have an even more difficult time of it than most older children. We have learned to guard against giving the new baby too much attention and neglecting the older child. But somehow there is no way to prevent people from "ohing" and "ahing" over twins. And then there is the plain fact that mother actually has little time left to pay much attention to the bigger child. Here again is a point where many future difficulties can be alleviated if mother has someone to help when the babies are little.

Stormy periods

If parents have done their part to help identical twins become aware of their individuality they may expect quite a stormy period while the twins are learning to accept the idea of each being a personality in his own right. It is difficult for a twin to permit his "double" to have different personality traits and accomplishments from his own. If John is a better fighter than Jim, Jim will resent this ability not just because of what it means in their relationship to each other but because John has set a goal which Jim cannot attain. When Mary began to mature somewhat more quickly than Helen she felt ashamed and embarrassed because Helen continued to behave in a manner she felt to be babyish. Helen cried too easily, she was a scairdy-cat. Mary hated her at this stage and wanted to get rid of this disagreeable image of herself.

With the exception of the names they had been given, Doris and Alice had all their lives been treated in the typically mythical way. When they were in high school they still dressed alike and shared mutual friends. But their mother became ill and was away from the home for a considerable period of time. During this period Alice developed a number of anxieties which eventually became so acute that she felt she could no longer go to school. While she remained at home she gradually took over most of the housekeeping and the "mothering" of the younger children. At this point the twin relationship disintegrated completely. Doris complained bitterly that Alice spoiled all her fun by not coming to school; she felt that Alice had been the popular one and that their friends paid little attention to her now that her twin was not with her. She bitterly resented the praise which her father heaped upon Alice as a result of her good housekeeping when after all she was just getting out of going to school. The younger children had become much more attached to Alice than to her. Altogether she felt completely left out.

Alice on her part was going through a very difficult period. She, too, felt rejected by her former friends. They were laughing at her because she could not go to school, her father did not understand her, Doris hated her. Her difficulties were aggravated by the fact that when they were babies they had looked so much alike that their mother could not tell them apart. At one time their identification bracelets came off and now she wasn't sure who she was. Was she really Alice? Or was she Doris?

It was quite obvious that these were not new feelings of jealousy and rivalry the girls were expressing, or a sudden realization on Alice's part of a confusion concerning her identity. These were feelings which had been held in abeyance by the twin relationship but which were precipitated by circumstances which made them realize they were separate individuals. This was an extreme case. However, I believe that in most instances the longer the twins cling to their twinship, that is, remain identified with one another, the more difficulty there will be when the time comes for them to try to live independent lives.

Once the twins can reach the stage of accepting their differentiation and each feels secure as a person in his own right, jealousy and rivalry will once more diminish, if not disappear completely. The twins will again feel close to each other and will be able to enjoy their twinship.

Thus we can conclude with Dorothy Burlingham when she says, ". . . The twin relationship goes through stormy periods; but finally survives these conflicts, and . . . the need for the twin makes each partner adapt and adjust

to the personality of the other. In this manner the twin relationship becomes the closest known tie between two individuals." The closest known tie, yes, but only *after* experiencing all the usual emotional growing pains.

Understanding vs. dependence

This close tie, this emotional and mental intimacy, is indisputably the advantage of twinship over all other human relationships. But there is a great difference between mutual understanding and dependency of one upon the other. We must guard against this dependency by doing everything we can to enable the twins to feel their own identity and individually to become well-integrated, creative members of society.

Live drama for children

Continued from page 20

tunity to examine the performers in costume at close hand.

Children also enjoy being able to laugh at the mistakes and ludicrous or unpredictable actions of their elders. A high spot in a recent show occurred when the Father ran down the aisle and pretended to stop the show by grabbing the front curtain—and was pulled up with it. The audience shrieked with joy as he hung there, wriggling and shouting for someone to discover him and to lower him back onto the stage again.

What are some of the other elements that are essential in effective children's entertainment? There should be much physical activity on stage, even physical conflict, such as fighting, dueling, wrestling—*acted out* rather than a mere exchange of angry words. Humor should be made visual too, rather than just the presentation of funny dialogue—clowning, for example, which, in contrast with adult theatre, becomes more and more hilarious for children the more it is repeated.

What is to be avoided in entertainment for young audiences? Long speeches; scenes with little activity; archaic language ("Hie thee hither and get thee hence!"); use of vocabulary beyond their years; an essentially imaginative idea not fully realized on stage (for example, the mere statement "My, isn't this a gay festival," without a pantomimic dance sequence presenting it in actuality); drabness and shoddiness in production (a king's robe must be regal and colorful; the fairy godmother's costume must live up to expectations)—all these failings are anathema.

In presenting the traditional children's stories we have found that most youngsters prefer to have us adhere pretty closely to the story as they know it. In fact they become quite indignant over any deviation in plot. However, we do make subtle modifications when we feel the occasion warrants it. In *Hansel and Gretel* we retained the witch with all her evil power, but had her fall into the oven of her own volition to be blown to pieces, rather than have Gretel push her into the oven. The children liked having the oven explode and the witch disappear leaving only a badly scorched cookie witch in her wake. Also we felt that in a world where divorces and broken homes are all too frequent, it was inadvisable to retain the "wicked stepmother" and instead substituted what was for us a more acceptable mother—one who was just too worried and tired to keep her children from running away into the forest, where the witch could work her spell.

The familiar and the unknown

Young children love the familiar, no matter how oft-repeated. For slightly older children, the new play with an entirely unknown plot has a great fascination. The very young seem to enjoy being in on the story and knowing what's going to happen next. But older children like the feeling of "the illusion of the first time." In order to satisfy this age level as well as the young teen-age groups, new scripts should be written, some perhaps with really modern themes and problems understandable to young people of that age. It is in this respect that children's theatre might well take note of the pull of radio and TV which have utilized children's interest in the contemporary with such spectacular results. In whatever medium, however, any lesson or message must be kept carefully concealed, for nothing is surer death to the interest of a children's audience than the feeling that they are being preached to.

The question of horror inevitably crops up in any discussion of children's entertainment, along with the amount of excitement to which a child should be subjected. It is a little hard to gauge this; what seems innocuous to an adult may be disturbing to children and vice-versa. The dimming of lights, for instance, is very upsetting to some children; more disturbing, in fact, than any activity taking place on stage. Again, many things that an adult can view objectively a child will respond to very personally. For example, once we managed to stop a little boy just as he was mounting the steps to the stage. He insisted that the wicked Duchess was a bad woman and he had to warn the Princess in time so she wouldn't get hurt. On the other hand, some of the incidents in our classic children's literature which make adults shudder may be passed over by a young audience with hardly a ripple.

When a child is distressed by a situation in a play we frequently discover that it is not the play but something unique in the experience of the child to which he is reacting. An example of this—fortunately not serious!—occurred in a recent performance of our winning script, *No Strings on Me*. The hero, a little boy, desiring to escape from everyday responsibilities, wishes to become a puppet. When his dreams are realized a kindly puppeteer tries to impress him with the fact that as a puppet he can have no human feelings. On this particular occasion, when he was tapped lightly on the knee to show him he had lost his sense of touch, his little sister, watching in the audience, suddenly burst into tears. Her father had the good sense to take her out of the theatre and backstage during the next intermission so that she could see her brother and be assured of his continued real existence. Once satisfied that it was just a story, she went back in to see the rest of the play and seemed to enjoy it.

Recent developments in child psychology will help us still further in defining those factors in Children's Theatre which are valuable and those which are questionable. A proper wedding of good theatre practice to the new insights could bring about an entirely fresh and exciting form of expression for children which would far outstrip our current theatre fare, just as the more advanced movie techniques make the old-time three reel Keystone Comedies look antiquated and ludicrous.

New staff member

Mrs. Beatrice Greenfield has joined the staff of our Family Counseling Service as of January. A graduate of the School of Applied Social Science of Western Reserve University, she has had extensive experience as a psychiatric case worker and supervisor in child guidance and family agencies and also has served as a case consultant to a nursery school program.

Booklist for adults

Books of the year for adult reading, as selected by the CSA Bibliography Committee, appeared in CHILD STUDY last year in two sections, the first in the Spring issue and the second in the Summer issue. This year, the two lists will be combined, for the readers' convenience, and will appear in the Summer, 1953 issue.

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CSA meetings

Responsibility in children

During the current season, the Child Study Association has held three meetings for members and their friends. The first, in October, was a panel discussion of the topic *Responsibility in Children—How Much Can They Assume?* Panel members were Dr. Nathaniel Ross, psychiatrist; Cornelia Goldsmith, Director, Day Care Division, New York City Health Department; Dr. Gunnar Dybwad, CSA Director; and Anna W. M. Wolf, of the CSA staff.

In relation to very young children, Miss Goldsmith suggested that the child's discovery of what he can do for himself is his first step toward responsibility. The little child, she said, will not maintain a consistent level of performance, and an effort to make him do so will deprive him of pleasure and, possibly, the inclination to go forward toward larger responsibilities.

With the somewhat older child, on the other hand, Mrs. Wolf felt that we probably have been *too* protective and have underestimated his capacities to share family responsibilities. The problem of adolescent responsibility presents further difficulties, Dr. Dybwad said. Here the decisions to be made have wider import, and may have more serious consequences. Sometimes young people find it difficult to know just what is expected of them since our ideas of what we want from them are apt to fluctuate.

Dr. Ross pointed out that a sense of responsibility is sometimes overdeveloped. It is most healthy where it is associated with pleasure in mastering external objects and also with affection for those in whose favor the sacrifice, or effort, is made.

Children's "problem" books

The November meeting discussed the effectiveness of books for children on emotional problems. Panel members were Dr. Viola Bernard, Associate in Psychology, Columbia University; Dr. Barbara Biber, psychologist, Bank Street College of Education; Dr. Milton Lewis, Assistant Professor of pediatrics, New York Hospital, Cornell Medical Center; Dr. Frances Wilson, Director of Guidance for the city's elementary schools; and Josette Frank, CSA staff member. Mrs. Hugh Grant Straus, chairman of the CSA Children's Book Committee, presided.

The subject for this meeting was suggested by the many requests which come to the Association asking for books to help with specific problems: a book for a child who is afraid of animals, a child who is too fat, or too small, a child whose parents are divorced, and so on. Recently, writers for children have attempted to treat some of these questions in fictional form, and the members of this panel agreed that such stories can be helpful, if they are written with creative imagination, rather than as preachy tracts, and if they do not offer solutions that are unrealistic. And where ignorance causes anxiety, it is possible for books to provide information that will help to reassure young readers. It is helpful, too, if the child has a chance to identify with strong and happy characters in a story. But where the good outcome in the book depends on either the child or the parents "reforming," a book may be more harmful than helpful. The discussion brought out that the value of books slanted toward emotional problems depends greatly on the way they are given to children, and by whom. Teen-agers, for instance, may resent being given a "problem" book by their parents whereas they would accept it if it came through the school or library. Whatever the circumstances, it was stressed that books can only supplement, and never replace, the understanding and help given directly to the child by his parents.

Grown-ups and children

Grown-ups in a Child's Life came in for discussion at the January meeting where a panel of four considered some aspects of a child's relationship with his parents and grandparents, and with other adults close to him, especially his teachers. On the panel at this meeting were Dr. Leonard Scheinman, psychiatrist; Dr. John J. Brooks, Director of the New Lincoln School; Sidonie Matsner Gruenberg, former Director of the Child Study Association; and Aline B. Auerbach, CSA staff member. Changes in social conditions have greatly affected these relations and some implications of these changes were pointed out by the discussants. On the one hand, since we rarely see the three-generation household any more, there is a tendency for small family units to live in something of a "hothouse" atmosphere. Under these circumstances parents sometimes find it hard to help their children enjoy and accept the differences they find in other adults. They may also be tempted to take refuge themselves from the complexities of this close relationship by trying to accept the stereotype of "good parents" and be "pals and friends" with their children in a saccharin way. It was pointed out that children actually need and prefer honest differences of opinion and want adults to be "young enough to talk to, but old enough to turn to." There must be a certain amount of "separateness" between the generations which allows the parents as well as the children to grow.

The needs of the child in relation to school were also discussed. While it is obviously desirable for adults in school and home to work together in the child's interests, it was agreed that some conflict between the two kinds of guidance is not destructive if both are based on warmth and sincerity.

Family relations conference

The National Council on Family Relations will hold its annual conference at the Kellogg Center for Continuing Education, East Lansing, Michigan, September 1-3, 1953. Dr. Gunnar Dybwad, Director of CSAA, is chairman of the Parent Education Section. Further information may be obtained by writing to the National Council on Family Relations, 5757 South Drexel Avenue, Chicago, Illinois.

Appeal for Anna Freud clinic

Currently, efforts are being made to raise funds for the Hampstead Child Therapy Course and Clinic which was organized some years ago by Anna Freud, LL.D., and of which she is director. This campaign was not instigated by Miss Freud, but by friends of the Clinic who believe that the work being carried on there is of decisive importance for the future of child analysis and child psychiatry, and the appeal is being sponsored by such distinguished psychiatrists as Drs. Robert P. Knight, Bertram D. Lewin, K. R. Eissler and Milton J. E. Senn, among others.

Contributions will be transferred to London through the Foster Parents' Plan for War Children, Inc., and will thus become tax deductible. In order to have these funds used specifically for Miss Freud's Clinic, contributions should be sent to:

Dr. Dora Hartmann, Treasurer,
The Hampstead Child Therapy Course and Clinic Fund
1150 Fifth Avenue, New York 28, New York.

Wanted: material on twins

Marjorie R. Leonard, author of *Twins: the myth and the reality,* (see page 9) is engaged in a broader study of twins and is interested in readers' reactions. Experiences which confirm or contradict those described would be especially welcomed. If any twins or parents of twins would like to cooperate in this study, the author also would welcome correspondence with them. Address all correspondence to Marjorie R. Leonard, 124 South Lasky Drive, Beverly Hills, California.

Renewals and back issues

It is important that you renew your subscription to CHILD STUDY promptly if you want to count on receiving every issue.

We particularly regret that the Winter 1952-53 issue is already out of stock, as we have many orders for copies which we cannot fill. If you do not want to keep your copy of that issue, we would very much appreciate your returning it to:

The Child Study Association of America
132 East 74th Street
New York 21, New York

Parent Discussion Groups

The CHILD STUDY ASSOCIATION announces three Parent Discussion Groups, of ten sessions each, to be held at Association Headquarters, beginning the week of March 9, 1953.

Parents today are eager to learn and to use their knowledge in a way that has meaning for themselves and their families. They want to meet together and to share their questions and their experiences under the guidance of skilled and informed leaders.

The Child Study Association therefore offers a series of discussion groups for mothers and fathers of children at various age levels.

I. *The Young Child*
(infancy through four)
Leader: Terry Spitalny
Monday evenings, 8:10-10:00

II. *The School-Age Child*
(five through nine)
Leader: Sylvia Brody
Wednesday mornings, 10:00-11:30

III. *The Young Teen-Ager*
(ten through fourteen)
Leader: Philip Zlatchin
Monday evenings, 8:30-10:00

Fee for each series:
$10.00 one parent
17.00 husband and wife

Enrollment in all groups will be limited. Registration interviews will be held beginning February 16th, and will be assigned in order of application. Write Association Headquarters, 132 East 74th Street, New York 21, N. Y., or telephone BUtterfield 8-6000 for an appointment.